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# VUEWEEKLY

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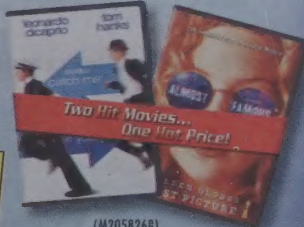
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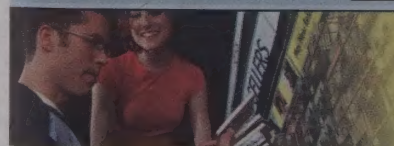
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Listen to an exclusive in depth interview with former member of the Minutemen and member of the legendary The Stooges, Mike Watt. Mike Watt in conversation on THE VELVET GROTT with Chris Andritch, Tuesday, December 16th between 9 and 10 pm



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# 10 days that didn't shake the world

A look back at shortest fall sitting of any provincial government

BY SHANNON PHILLIPS

The security guys at the provincial legislature are always the most pleasant part of any skip across the river to watch the parliamentary shitshow. "The biggest kindergarten in the province," joked one of the boys in blue as we went through security. "Not if the Learning Minister has his way with class sizes these days," I mumbled under my breath. Last week, Alberta's 83 MLAs wrapped up the shortest fall sitting in the country. Albertans were treated to

10 whole days of debate on the issues and several pieces of legislation. Family law, universities and colleges, First Nations land rights, water usage and auto insurance topped the agenda.

While legislation is a bit of a yawn, Liberal and New Democrat opposition MLAs generally ensure a good debate on the issues. (Full disclosure: I recently began a contract position as a consultant for the fed-

eral NDP.) However, very little of this debate makes it into the mainstream press; indeed, the *Edmonton Journal* legislature bureau almost never covers the actual substance of debate surrounding legislation. Instead, the *Journal's* approach has been to wait for "leaks" to come from government, usually the day before a major policy initiative or law is to be announced. The result is "news" in which the government gets its message out before opposition parties or citizen groups can formulate a well-informed response. Favoured reporters cultivate relationships with Tory politicians and bureaucrats, and the career advancement that comes from plum leaks is, consequently, not disturbed by investigative reporting or undue attention to groups critical of the government's agenda.

A little remedial media is therefore in order. What follows is a shorthand guide to some of the laws the government of Alberta passed last week, and what the opposition had to say about them.

SEE PAGE 10

## ANALYSIS

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# You want to know why I'm angry?

Our fourth A-Channel strike diary contributor says his former friends have stabbed him in the back

By CHRIS PETERSON

Until the A-Channel strike began on September 17, I was an electronic news gathering photographer for the station. Now my other job is more important—I'm the chief steward of Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 1900, which represents striking workers. I've been a photographer for nearly 14 years, three here in Canada and the rest all over the American midwest. In the three years I've worked at A-Channel, I received one raise. (In the meantime, with deductions going up, my biweekly paycheck has actually decreased.)

I was recently asked to write this column for *Vue* describing what it's like being on strike at A-Channel. I wrote one, submitted it and was asked "Why are you so angry?" Well, let's look into that.

Anyone who knows me can tell you that I shoot straight from the hip. I do not mince words. Since this strike began, I've displayed that quality every day, whether by yelling profanity at a scab or doing anything I

can to disrupt a broadcast, like making noise or attempting to get into camera shots. This has apparently put me on management's "most wanted list." I know this because a so-called "friend" on the inside told me that management was targeting me.

So what? Bring it on. I've done nothing illegal and I won't. I know that the worst any scab has been treated by a striking worker is being called names and sworn at. What do you expect me to do—kiss them on the cheek and pat them on the ass as they go to work and do my job? Hell no.

## OPINION

Two goons went face-to-face with me in a parking lot recently; they seemed to want me to throw a punch. The same day, one of our people was hit by the door of an SUV in the parking lot across from our strike office as he videotaped me being threatened. And you wonder why I'm angry?

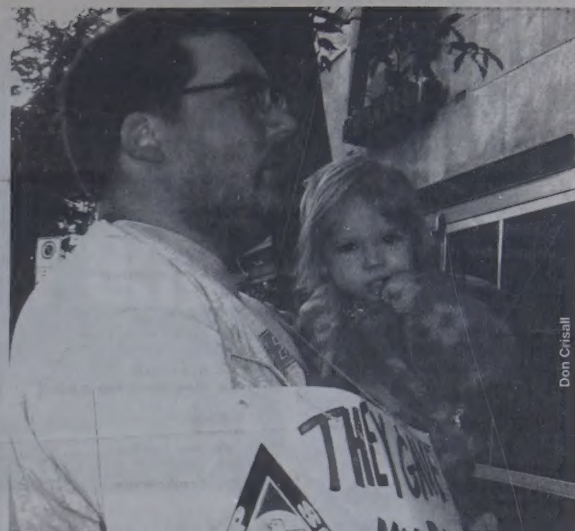
But here's what makes me really mad. The so-called "friends" on the inside scabbing who effectively stabbed every one of their co-workers in the back. Why do they do it? To me, it's greed and cowardice. It makes me angry that people who I considered good friends are now inside taking that dirty money. Someone I let babysit my daughter decided that a \$1,000 bonus was

more important than our friendship. How much for a soul? Mine costs a hell of a lot more than that.

There's one person who used to get into my truck and asked to see pictures of my daughter every time. This person bought a dress for my daughter, the dress I christened her in. I sent the dress back to this person, who crosses my picket line every day. And they wonder why I am angry?

The scab who told me I was a target, he basically taught me how to play hockey. Hell, he set me up for my first goal. I held this person in high regard, I considered him a close friend—and what did I get for it? Knife in the back. Now he's inside doing my job. Those scabs are stealing from us. Each and every one of them. Thieves. And they wonder why I am so angry?

**THEY ALL TRY TO QUALIFY** their choices by saying they're just being loyal to the company, that they're concerned about their families, that they want the strike over just as much as we do, and that they're doing the right thing. Well, if that were true, they would have walked with us and this would have been over already. If the decision they made was so right, why do they need to hide behind goons and tinted windows? I am not hiding; I have nothing to be ashamed of. Nothing they can say will ever change the fact that they crossed a



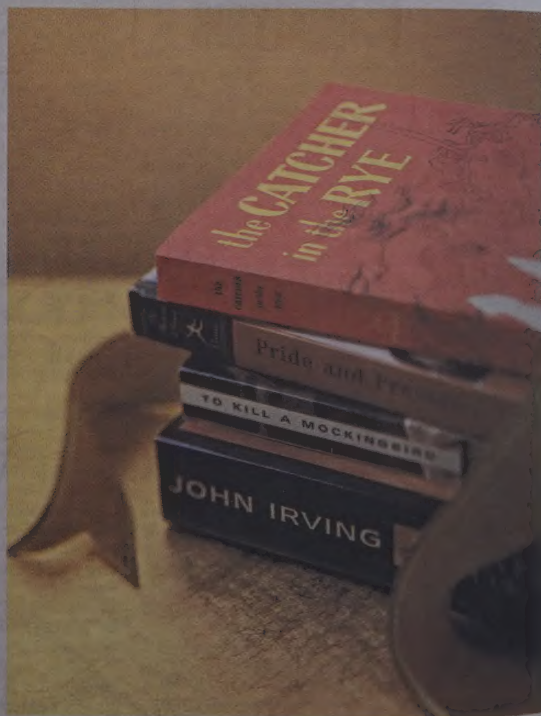
Don Crisall

legal picket line. They are marked for life. Good luck getting your next job. The company owns you.

Let's talk a little about management and their "negotiations," or lack thereof. They came to the table saying that they would move on some issues. Not really. They said that we had their final offer and then walked away from the table again. And they wonder why I am angry?

This strike is not just about me and my paycheck. It's about every one of the striking workers. Every time I call out a scab, I am not doing

it for my own satisfaction; I am doing it for every one of our members. The ones who are the sole moneywinners in their families and have four kids, the ones who are single parents living cheque-to-cheque, and for the future A-Channel employee who wants to make a honest wage for a honest day's work. I will do anything I can to help obtain a fair contract for them. So the next time one of those scabs tells me I was just lucky that A-Channel gave me a job, I will remember that a job is a right, not a privilege. And then I will get angry. ☐



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### CHAPTER TWO

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# Diamond time again

Local laboratory opens window  
to a world of trouble

BY CAITLIN CRAWSHAW



A new diamond research lab on the University of Alberta campus bears the name of the company that funds it—the world's largest diamond producer, DeBeers. From this symbolic and financial gesture, a controversy emerged in Edmonton last year, with some students questioning their school's decision to accept the \$100,000 donation. DeBeers, they argued, had long been accused of obtaining diamonds from mines controlled by rebel factions in volatile nations such as Angola, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Like other corporations in the industry, DeBeers has also been accused of relying on child and slave labour to mine the gems and, indirectly, of supporting war and human suffering.

A diamond is forever, DeBeers has been telling us in its aggressive advertising campaigns of recent years. And it seems that the misery behind the gem is just as enduring. But while the story of human rights abuses in the industry is far from over, the tale has taken a turn for the better. The diamond industry is now changing its practices after a few years of campaigning by non-governmental organizations like One Sky, Amnesty and Partnership Africa Canada (PAC).

Although many consumers remain ignorant of the ugliness behind the sparkling rocks, greater awareness is spreading. It's a David-versus-Goliath undertaking for the NGOs involved, but they say they're making reasonable progress. Human rights abuses are still a problem, but representatives from all three NGOs I spoke with deem their underdog efforts quite successful, a tenacious few altering the practices of a multi-billion-dollar industry.

IT'S AS IF Lansana Gberie's skin has hardened from his knowledge of the horrors of the war. His voice on the telephone is abrasive, his words short, hard and to the point. He speaks reluctantly of his experiences and, from the little that he does tell, it's obvious why he hesitates. Who would willingly relive such painful truths?

Gberie, a native of Sierra Leone who has worked with both PAC and his homeland's truth and reconciliation commission, was still living in the region when war broke out in

1991. "In the war, extremely horrific violence took place," he says. "People were mutilated, their hands chopped off, including the hands of babies and women. Very young people were killed and mutilated."

A rebel group called the Revolutionary United Front was responsible for many massacres in the area, funding their violence through the sale of diamonds. Particularly fruitful were the mines in the Kono district, where roughly 70 per cent of Sierra Leone's diamonds are found, according to Gberie. "More violence took place in that district, frankly, than any other district," he says, describing a recent three-day trip to the area to collect testimonies of witnesses and diamond traders on behalf of the truth and reconciliation commission.

"I was told of some ex-soldier [rebels] who killed 500 people," Gberie continues, "and a huge mass grave was found which may contain the bodies of up to 1,000 people, which was sealed off by UN investigators for a special court in Sierra Leone. If you go there right now, it has been sealed off, but you can see the skulls of people." Gberie tells of how a once-thriving community of 200,000 people was obliterated by the rebel attacks in late 1997. "Hundreds of people were killed here and massacred," he says. "And almost all civilians abandoned the town.... So when the rebels attacked the town in late 1997, everybody abandoned the town. They destroyed, comprehensively, everything—all the houses.... They were digging for diamonds all over the town. I've never seen a town destroyed by war in this manner. Completely destroyed."

TURMOIL IN SIERRA LEONE drew international attention to the human rights abuses of the diamond industry several years ago, when PAC began investigating the causes of the region's 10-year-long conflict. PAC, a coalition of Canadian and African NGOs whose work centres around human security and sustainable development, discovered that diamonds were indeed fueling the conflict.

"We didn't know much about the diamond industry and we didn't necessarily care about it," says

Bernard Taylor, the executive director of PAC. "It wasn't a problem for us; [we were there] to stop the war. But as we delved into the problem, we discovered that what was happening there was linked to this international industry, which was managed in a really opaque way. And it led to our first publication on Sierra Leone and the international diamond industry, where we accused the industry of turning a blind eye to what was happening in Sierra Leone and other places."

Conflict or "blood" diamonds are those mined and sold to other sectors of the industry by rebel groups who use the profits to fund violent conflicts. PAC and other agencies learned that the conflict in Sierra Leone was being financed by rebel groups that took over diamond mines in the area and fed off their profits. But as Craig Benjamin of Amnesty Canada told me, the diamond industry has a poor human rights record in many other respects as well.

"Whether we're talking about governments or armed opposition

## FEATURE

groups, anyone who has any control in any stage of the process of diamonds, from the extraction or mining of diamonds, through to the final sale... has the potential to use those diamonds for various purposes other than legitimate trade," he explains. "Their nature—their high value, their portability, their durability, the difficulty in tracing their origins—all of these factors have historically made diamonds a extremely useful commodity for all kinds of illegal transactions."

According to Amnesty Canada and PAC, the production sector profits by using child labour to dig mines, while the cutting and polishing sector profits by paying highly-trained workers minimal wages. Illicit trading is also a problem, with much of the trade conducted through back-room dealings to avoid taxes. While steps have been taken to curb conflict diamonds, illicit trading may be the next big challenge. Taylor says the black market accounts for 20 per cent of all diamond trading. "The bigger prob-

lem, or at least the next step problem, is the illicit trade, which of course doesn't help governments or people or development," he says. "It's illicit and it's illegal—and that of course attracts all sorts of Mafia-type people, and that leads to situations where conflict can occur."

In fact, the more dirt you brush off the surface, the deeper and darker the story of the diamond trade becomes.

ONE SOLUTION to some of these atrocities may be the so-called Kimberley Process, which emerged from meetings initiated by South Africa in 2000. Three years ago, diamond industry reps, governments and NGOs sat down to discuss the human cost of diamond production. Taylor explains that the process is named after Kimberley, the diamond centre of South Africa. Diamonds were found there in the late 19th century, launching the modern diamond trade. It was South Africa that brought the international community together in the 1990s to confront human rights issues, says Taylor. Moreover, South Africa has chaired the Kimberley Process meetings since 2000. But starting in January 2004, Canada will assume the position of chair. For Taylor, this is a very positive move; he's optimistic about Canada's involvement.

Essentially, the meetings have resulted in more accountability and transparency around the global movement of diamonds. Member countries cannot trade with states which have not agreed to the protocol, and diamonds transported between member states require documentation disclosing their origins. The origin of many diamonds used to be murky; now the Kimberley Process has cleared up the picture. "It's added a very clear administrative path for diamonds to follow," says Taylor, "which wasn't there before. And because everything was unclear, it encouraged contraband, it encouraged illicit trading."

While the process is seen by all three NGOs as an important step, they've also criticized it for not creating an independent monitoring system. A round of Kimberley

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## vue news

### HUMAN RIGHTS

#### Activists protest CSIS anti-terrorist "secret trials"

EDMONTON—"Stop the Secret Trials in Canada," read a sign held aloft in front of RCMP K Division headquarters at the corner of 111 Ave and 109 St last Saturday. Responding to the increasingly publicized—and increasingly politicized—treatment of suspected terrorists, a small group of 15 braved the cold to protest against what they feel are the real threats to Canadian security: national laws that strip citizens and immigrants of basic human rights.

"Under the CSIS security certificate, Canada's spy agency has the ability to imprison Muslim men of Middle Eastern or Arabic background without charges or bail," said activist Linda Leibovitz, who planned the protest in solidarity with an Ontario organization called Homes Not Bombs. "Neither they nor their lawyers are permitted to see the evidence against them under the blanket claim of 'national security.'"

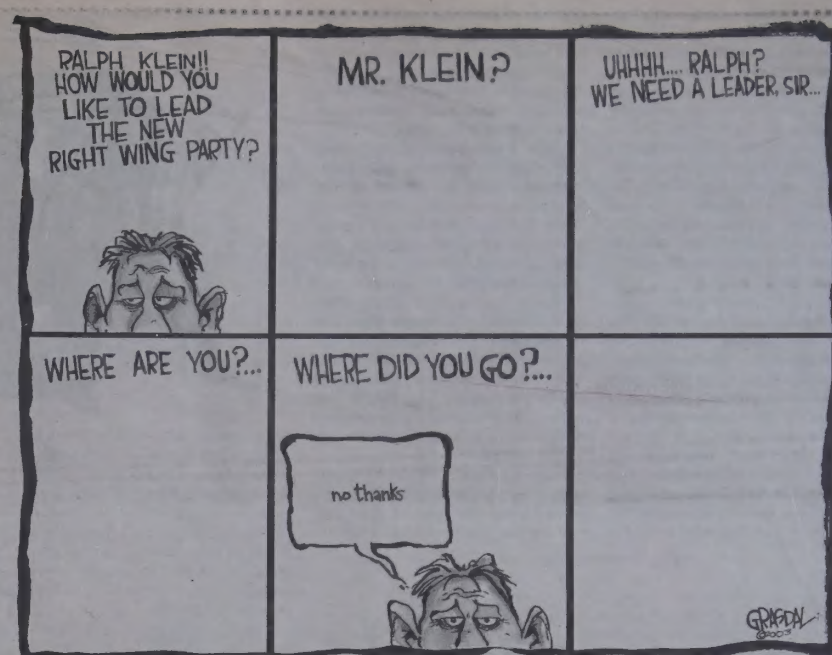
Last Saturday, Leibovitz read out the names of Hassan Almrei, Mahmoud Harkat, Adil Charkaoui, Mohammad Majoub and Mahmoud Jaballah—all men who have been detained indefinitely and are facing deportation. Refugee Hassan Almrei is being "fast-tracked" by Citizenship and Immigration Canada to be sent to Syria. For almost two years, Almrei has been confined by authorities on the premise that he's linked to a terrorist organization. But these CSIS claims have not been backed by evidence. And recently released Canadian citizen Maher Arar, who was deported to Syria by the United States, has publicly expressed concerns that Almrei will likely endure torture (as he did) if sent to Syria.

"A lot of these [cases] look like they were done to assure the Americans that Canada is falling in line and that we're doing the same thing," said protester Peggy Morton, asking "Why did they pick these five people and put them in jail?"

When asked if there were any similar cases in Edmonton, Morton said, "We meet people all the time who have personally, or whose families have, been interrogated by the RCMP. One of the huge pressures on people is that if you don't tell everything you know about everybody, you're suspected yourself. It's the basis of McCarthyism. It creates an atmosphere of fear. But this doesn't seem to be happening here. I haven't seen anyone intimidated by it."

Leibovitz, however, told a story about an Palestinian mother in Edmonton who won't allow her two university sons to attend peace rallies, fearing they will be "taken in" or reprimanded. "I understand her reaction as I am too a mother and an immigrant," Leibovitz said. "But she's wrong. We need all people to stand up for their rights."

Why would anyone be scared? Well, the CSIS website states that the "Immigra-



gration and Refugee Protection Act contains provisions which allow a security certificate to be prepared and signed... when a permanent resident or foreign national is deemed to be inadmissible on grounds of security, violating human or international rights, serious criminality or organized criminality."

Furthermore, these laws can be racially interpreted, explained Morton. "The notion of national security is predicated on the idea that 'the other,' the immigrant, is the threat to so-called Canadians," she said.

"We're very concerned about not only what effect these laws are having at the time, but the ramifications and implications seen later on," added another protester, Kevin Hunter. "I mean, how far can this go? Every Canadian could be a terrorist for questioning policy." Comparably, this could go further. The Homeland Security Act in the United States says that even advocating boycotts can be considered an act of treason.

American ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci visited Edmonton on Monday to award medals to Canadian soldiers who fought in Afghanistan. Last week he responded to questions about another "Arar" happening by saying, "We respect the Canadian passport [but] reserve the right to act unilaterally."

"This fight is really about the need to have fundamental rights enshrined in law in Canada," Morton said, "and it shows at this time they are not." —SHERYLE CARLSON

### INTERNET

#### SOCAN demands anti-piracy fee from ISPs

OTTAWA—Canada's Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers—better known throughout the music biz as SOCAN—is going to the Supreme Court with a petition to institute a new per-head tax on all Internet users in the country, whether they illegally copy copyrighted music or not.

SOCAN, which represents musicians

and songwriters across the Canada, is asking that all Internet Service Providers (ISPs) be forced to pay 25 cents per registered user, plus 10 per cent of all advertising fees they collect. SOCAN argues that the extra fees are needed to help Canadian artists cope with revenues lost to Internet piracy. Since the proposal has been made, chat sites and blogs across cyberspace have been buzzing.

The new levy would affect both Internet pirates and legitimate users. A person who downloads through officially sanctioned sites or pay-for-use sites such as iTunes would have to pay the SOCAN levy even though some of their money already goes to the society. For legitimate users, this would mean double taxation.

Moreover, SOCAN already collects a levy on every blank CD and MiniDisc sold in this country to help offset losses due to piracy. The Internet Council of Canada says that even though millions have been collected through this tax, none of that money has filtered down to Canadian artists. It fears the same would happen with an ISP levy. "The flow of money being generated by this tariff is staggering, even at the current rates," writes A. Saul Rothbart, president of the ICC. "Over the past two years, \$32 million has been received in total surcharges from Canadian consumers of blank media. Over \$21 million has been derived directly from the sale of writable CDs. Curiously, to date the actual intended recipients—namely, the music creators, performers and makers—have yet to see a single penny from these funds."

The Canadian Private Copying Collective was set up to administer the redistribution of the tariff to the music industry. Its own white paper states that two-thirds of money collected in 2001 and 2002 will go to music authors and publishers, 18.9 per cent to performers and 15.1 per cent to the record companies.

While SOCAN helps Canadian artists protect their copyrights, the organization has come under fire for the zeal

with which it goes after the Canadian public for licensing fees. SOCAN came under heavy criticism in September when it announced that it planned to charge dentist offices for the right to play music in their waiting rooms, and in April when it asked an Ottawa pub which holds a regular jam session for royalties because the musicians were playing copyrighted material.

But this new case has even greater ramifications for the Internet in Canada. If the Supreme Court rules in favour of SOCAN, it sets a precedent that ISPs are legally responsible for all files cached on their systems. And that means companies like Shaw and Bell could be named in any contentious Internet matter, from copyright violation to child porn. —STEVEN SANDOR

### LECTURES

#### Star Chambers

EDMONTON—In his recently released book *Roots for Radicals*, American "citizen power" organizer Edward T. Chambers writes, "A truly democratic public life requires the organization, education and development of leaders who regard themselves as equal, sovereign citizens with the know-how to stand for the whole. We're not born with these civic skills and virtues, and today's instant gratification culture constantly undermines them. The radical question is why should things be this way, rather than another?"

Why, indeed. Find out yourself this Saturday, December 13, when the Greater Edmonton Alliance hosts a free talk by Chambers at the Christ Church Anglican Parish Hall (12116-102 Ave) from 2:30 to 4 p.m. Chambers serves as the national director of a group called the Industrial Areas Foundation, which works on building citizen groups throughout the world. The Greater Edmonton Alliance, which brings together leaders from faith, labour, education and civic organizations, shares similar goals. —DAN RUBINSTEIN



## vue point

By DAN RUBINSTEIN

#### Know the Leg

Last week, on December 3, when the 10-day fall sitting of the Alberta legislature sputtered to a halt, only 36 of the 74 Tory MLAs were in their seats. As Shannon Phillips details in her look back at the shortest fall sitting in the country (see page 4), several of the esteemed members who were present managed to survive those oh-so-tedious debates by playing videogames on their laptops, surfing the Internet and snoozing.

Among the absentees on various days of the sitting were Premier Ralph Klein, Energy Minister Murray Smith, Finance Minister Pat Nelson and Environment Minister Lorne Taylor. With the legislature in session for a mere 56 days this year—up from 47 and 36 days the previous two years—you'd think engagements like a speech to the Wetaskiwin Chamber of Commerce about deregulation (Smith) and a speech in Toronto about public-private partnerships (Nelson) could have been scheduled more prudently. (By way of comparison, the legislatures in B.C., Ontario and Manitoba all sit for around 70 days a year, while the House of Commons in Ottawa was in session for a whopping 125 days in 2002.)

What do all these numbers mean? Well, the Parkland Institute has supplied some stats of its own in a well-timed new report released last Monday, *Trouble in Paradise? Citizens' Views on Democracy in Alberta*. According to the study, which looked at data from a U of A survey of 1,200 adult Albertans earlier this year, 66 per cent of people in the province think the economy is healthy or very healthy—but only 40 per cent believe our democracy is healthy or very healthy. Moreover, 79 per cent of respondents feel that "big business" has too much influence on government and 67 per cent say "the media" has too much influence as well.

The report also looked specifically at our current Tory government. Fifty per cent of those surveyed agreed with the statement that "the Alberta government hides a lot of information from the people of the province" and 46 per cent agreed that "the provincial government has removed too much power from local (municipal) authorities." Pointing out that people who identified themselves as Liberal or New Democrat supporters were more likely to agree, the report goes on to say, "It is noteworthy that about four out of 10 Conservative supporters agreed with both statements."

The survey did not, alas, ask how many Tory supporters like the fact that Learning Minister Lyle Oberg was playing video golf during the final few hours of legislative debate. ☉





## three dollar bill

By RICHARD BURNETT

### lack eye for the queer guy

wasn't long ago that the Fab Five sw me off—and none of them even much as licked my dick.

Last summer, on the eve of the nadian premiere of *Queer Eye for the Right Guy*, all my interview requests were refused. The Fab Five were not, I is told, blabbing with any Canadian media. It reminded me of my experience th Dennis Quaid, who refused my erview request when he was filming he Hollywood blockbuster in Montre last winter. "Mr. Quaid only does

interviews with U.S. national media," his publicist told me (as I thought to myself, "That motherfucker couldn't even pay to be interviewed five years ago").

I don't enjoy playing the incestuous journalist-celebrity game, and many celebs, quite frankly, don't want to be interviewed in this column. After I thought I had secured an interview with longtime closet queen Richard Chamberlain following the publication of his so-so autobiography *Shattered Love*, one of his publishing-company publicists asked me, "You won't be mean to him, will you?"

I never got the interview.

So I couldn't help but smile when, after being blown off by the Fab Five, *New York* magazine reported that QE45G hair-and-face guy Kyan Douglas proved he could be as much a swine as Quaid when he berated journalists in the VIP area at the New York opening of clothing label Von Dutch. "Get the fucking press out of here!" Kyan reportedly "shrieked" before he demanded that two journalists from *In Touch Weekly* explain how they crashed the VIP lounge. *New York* then went in for the

kill: "Given Douglas's decidedly B-list status, we're surprised no one in the VIP area yelled, 'Get the fucking *Queer Eye* for the *Straight Guy* guy out of here!'" The mag then sarcastically noted Kyan's über-bitch routine surely "endeared him to any number of TV writers."

Now, if you think that by trashing hunky Kyan I'm reinforcing bitter-sweet stereotypes of the gay community (and remember, as much as I love *Will and Grace*, that show's Will and Jack characters are the Amos and Andy of gay TV), then you have to admit QE45G is nothing more than a gay minstrel show.

Bruce Vilanch, the chief gag writer for the Oscars who happily agreed to be interviewed in this column last winter, recently told *Bay Windows* magazine, "I think it should be called *Queen Eye for the Straight Guy*. They're just queens! They're funny, but to me it has such limited appeal. How long can you sustain that joke?"

Clearly the joke's on us. The QE45G stars have seen their salaries bumped from \$3,000 per episode to \$8,000 and the Fab Five have inked a million-



dollar advance with Random House for a book subtitled *The Fab Five's Guide to Looking Better, Cooking Better, Dressing Better, Behaving Better and Living Better*. One wonders how these minstrels will translate their secret formula from screen to page. After all, the true allure of QE45G—at least for straight women and gay men—is watching straight men get humiliated.

My favourite QE45G guy remains Ted Allen, the food guy, who has guested (with his co-stars) on Howard Stern, Jay Leno and Oprah. It's no surprise that Allen, 38, began his career as a cub reporter with the *Chicago Sun-Times*. (Today he's a restaurant critic for *Chicago* magazine and the "Things a Man Should Know" columnist for *Esquire*.) Allen once told veteran *Sun-Times* columnist Bill Zwecker, "You

know, I think I'm gay. I don't know how the office is going to react."

This past summer, Zwecker reportedly e-mailed his former protégé, "So, I guess this gay thing worked out."

"I don't know what possessed me to audition [for QE45G]," Allen told reporters last summer. "I never had any interest in doing TV, let alone the bastard subgenre of reality programming. I remember thinking this can be so bad. I mean, this can suck hard."

Just like celebrity.

Meanwhile, Allen's partner of 10 years, Columbia College journalism professor Barry Rice, says Allen now wears baseball caps and sunglasses so he can remain anonymous in public. Worse, Rice continues, "He looks like a straight guy."

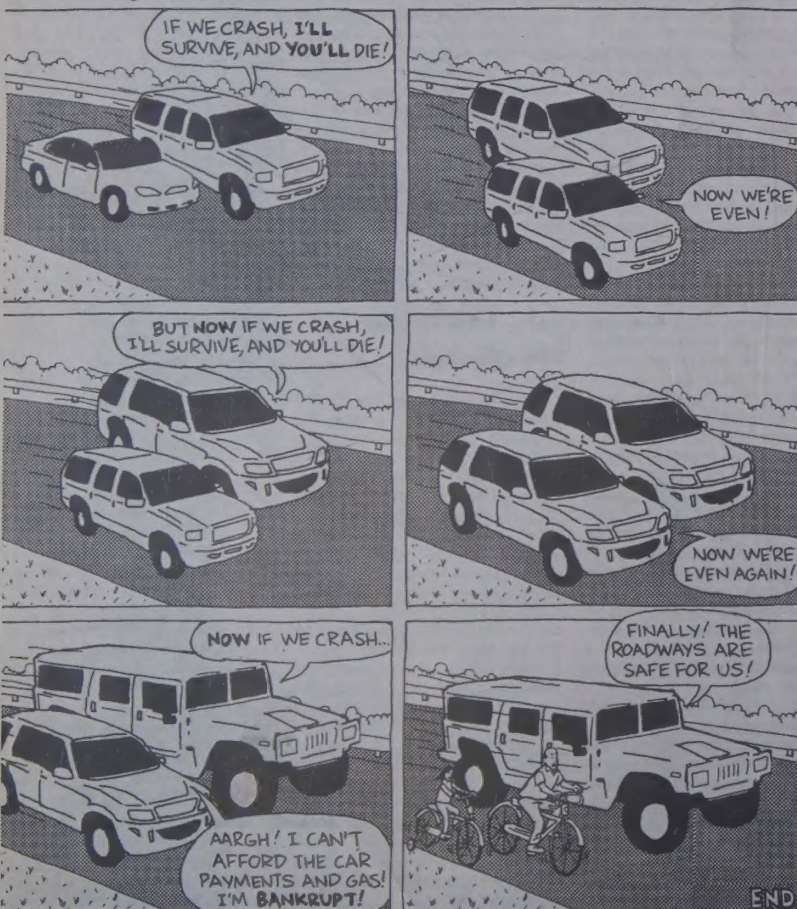
Really? Clearly there are worse things than being interviewed by me. ☹

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by RUBEN BOLLING

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## Haiku Horoscope

### ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)

Laughter can be the Best medicine, but not when Your ribs are broken



### LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)

Your heart will break this Week in another triumph Of my voodoo tricks



### TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)

Do not ask for whom The bell tolls or I might have To slap you up some



### SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)

Grab that shotgun and Start wasting zombies like the Zombar that you are



### GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)

A Terminator Has been sent to stop you from Boring the future



### SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)

You can never have Enough money, power or Potato chips, man



### CANCER

(June 21-July 22)

Your abduction by Aliens will not be done For science but sex



### CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)

Videogames are A great way to waste your life And all your money



### LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)

O solo Leo Improve your chances for love With a paper bag



### AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)

I'm just saying that Because I keep losing to The damn computer



### VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)

The late night party Bird has to drink tequila To get at the worm



### PISCES

(Feb 19-Mar 20)

A surefire way to Beat the blues is by killing Living blues legends



by Jonathan Ball, Registered Fraud, www.jonathanball.com



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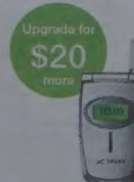
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10429 - 178th St., #100  
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9035 - 170 St.  
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Skyview Power Centre  
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Edmonton Cellular  
14903 - 118 Ave.  
Edmonton Wireless  
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Save On Telecom  
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Westcan Wireless  
12618 - 124 St.

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# Bill 49: Public Lands Amendment Act

While Tories anticipated tussles over other issues, they didn't expect all of the Treaty 8 chiefs to visit the chamber on December 2, when Premier Ralph Klein had to apologize to the chiefs for the process surrounding Bill 49. The government held that Bill 49 was necessary for "clarifying existing rules" and giving government "better tools to deal with unlawful activities, such as trespassing on closed roads, destroying gates and preventing access," according to Denis Ducharme, the MLA for Bonnyville-Cold Lake.

However, to many First Nations leaders, new rules about preventing access to public lands sounds an awful lot like a swipe at how First Nations groups use blockades as a tool for prompting political change, in the context of relative powerlessness in industry or government. The

Treaty 8 chiefs were particularly unimpressed when they heard about Bill 49 through the media and had not been consulted on the wording surrounding punishments for blockades. Consultation with First Nations leaders was overlooked, despite the \$6 million the government put aside last April for an ambitious aboriginal consultation project. Despite the apology, a meeting with the premier and a promise for future consultation, Treaty 8 chiefs rejected Bill 49 in its entirety. Government members went ahead and approved Bill 49, unchanged, on December 3.

# Bill 43: Post-Secondary Learning Act

Bill 43 contains changes to tuition fee policy, allows for the establishment of private, for-profit "resident" universities and permits the Minister of Learning to investigate and dissolve elected Students' Unions if the minister detects financial irregularities, which are not defined in the law.

Bill 43 garnered a modicum of student attention and prompted

opposition members to grill government on the question of tuition and student debt. During Bill 43's final reading, opposition members drew attention to ministerial dissolution of elected Students' Unions, despite the fact that student associations receive no money from the provincial government and rely solely on student fees and association-run businesses like bars and restaurants for revenue. During the debate, Learning Minister Lyle Oberg displayed just how little he had actually listened to student representatives. While opposition members had the floor, Oberg repeatedly shouted "Do students get to decide on their fees? Are regular students allowed to say no to fee increases?" The answer: students approve all students' association fee increases via referendum, one of the arguments against ministerial intrusion students had been making since Bill 43 was first introduced. Thanks for listening, Lyle.

# "Water for Life" strategy

Leaked to the *Edmonton Journal* a day before it was introduced in the legislature, Environment Minister Lorne Taylor's "Water for Life" strategy is aimed at developing "knowledge and research, partnerships and conservation" in order to address Alberta's looming water shortage. A key component of assessing conservation measures is, in Taylor's words, "accounting for the true cost of delivering water" in order to "determine the economic value of water" over the next three years. The actual legislation supporting the water

# Pong and solitaire: your government in action

On December 3, the last night of the fall sitting, the government passed eight major laws, including changes to the Family Law Act, the Post-Secondary Learning Act, the Public Lands Act and the Insurance Act. Thirty-six of the 74 Conservative MLAs were present. From the visitors gallery, it's easy to look down and see what MLAs are reading or doing on their government-issue laptops. Here's what some of the Tories were doing during debate.

**Lorne Taylor, Environment Minister:** took off his shoes, put his feet up on the chair next to him and read novels. Snoozed intermittently.

**Pat Nelson, Minister of Finance:** played solitaire with Shirley McLellan on her laptop.

**Shirley McLellan, Agriculture Minister and Deputy Premier:** helped Pat Nelson play solitaire (apparently it took two of them to figure it out), read a novel, nodded off.

**Clint Dunford, Minister of Human Resources and Employment:** watched the trailer for *Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World* on his laptop.

**Lyle Oberg, Minister of Learning:** played golf on his laptop.

**Richard Marx (MLA for Olds-Didsbury-Three Hills) and Moe Amery (MLA for Calgary East):** shared a computer version of Pong for two hours.

**Wayne Cao (MLA for Calgary Fort):** surfed his own website.

**Mary Ann Jablonski (MLA for Red Deer North):** appeared to be working on her laptop.

**Victor Doerksen (MLA for Red Deer South):** surfed the Internet

**Drew Hutton (MLA for Edmonton Glenora):** came and went intermittently, giggled and taunted the opposition for a few minutes, left again, came back, surfed the Internet, left again.

**Ralph Klein (Premier):** absent. —SHANNON PHILLIPS

strategy will be introduced in the spring, but don't worry, folks—there aren't any plans to sell bulk water to the United States after we've determined what the essence of life on earth is worth to corporations. As Taylor explained to Liberal Leader Ken Nicol on November 29, selling water to the United States "would require a special act of the legisla-

ture." With only 74 of 83 members, the Tories will probably have a hard time getting something like that through the house. ☉

All quotations are taken from Alberta Hansard, the official record of legislature proceedings, available at [www.assembly.ab.ca](http://www.assembly.ab.ca).

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## Diamonds

Continued from page 6

Process meetings were held in late October in Sun City, South Africa and independent monitoring was on the agenda. Yet the meetings did not result in the establishment of a mandatory monitoring system, but rather a system of voluntary participation. "There's a voluntary system which is worthwhile in that it could help both establish some models for monitoring and it could develop acceptance for monitoring," explains Benjamin. "But in and of itself, it doesn't solve the problem. For as long as there is any point in the system [where] it isn't being monitored, there's no assurance for the system as a whole."

**ALL THREE NGOS** I spoke with emphasize that the Kimberley Process is only one way to clean up the industry and that much more needs to be done. According to Taylor, many of the human rights abuses

in the industry will not be affected by the Kimberley Process. "It's a mechanism, a system for monitoring the movement of rough diamonds," he says. "So it doesn't look at how the industry works in a given country, whether child labour is used, whether people are paid fairly. Those sorts of social or human rights issues are not covered by it."

That said, Amnesty Canada, PAC and One Sky are generally happy with their progress thus far. Even Lansana Gberie argues that consider-

ing the time frame of the changes, the NGOs have been quite successful. "Although there are still outstanding issues, progress has been frankly phenomenal," he says. "The whole thing happened two or three years ago. People really started talking about it."

But I wonder if this Goliath has truly been slain. While NGOs continue to campaign for better practices, child labour is hardly a thing of the past and rebel soldiers still shoot to kill. Can a few administrative changes really slay this beast?

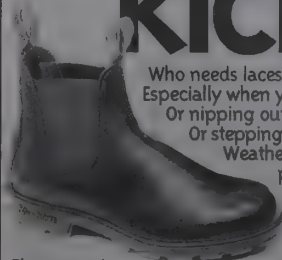
Walking past the new DeBeers lab at U of A, I recall an image of the black silhouette of a woman's hand, her tapered fingers receiving a sparkling diamond ring to the music of a heartstring-plucking classic. For me, this television ad has an entirely different feel from the one it once had for me. The image has lost its innocence. There is no romantic tale at its heart. That's been replaced by a political saga more multifaceted than a cut diamond—and as ugly as a diamond in the rough. ●



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# ON THE COVER

Chester Brown



# Riel genius

Chester Brown turns Louis Riel's life into a comic book that's anything but cartoonish

By DAN RUBINSTEIN

Like most of us—most of our friends, too—Chester Brown learned all about Louis Riel in high school history class. Like millions of Canadian teens past and present, Brown sat there, possibly daydreaming, probably doodling, perhaps even listening, as the teacher droned on about the Red River Settlement, Rupert's Land and the Hudson's Bay Company. Brown's teacher likely mentioned Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald shaking hands with a British businessman, forking over 300,000 pounds cash and buying a new map for Canada. But faster than you can say "Manitoba," there was Louis Riel, representing for Métis rights. Until he was executed for treason, that is.

Despite the drama, bloodshed and symbolism of the North-West Rebellion, Brown didn't think about adapting the epic story into a graphic novel until 1995, when he read a new Riel biography. You see, like most of us—most of our friends, too—Brown hadn't exactly committed those history classes to memory. "Since I began this project, I've been asking everybody what they know about Riel," Brown says over the phone from his cramped bachelor apartment/studio in downtown Toronto, taking a break from inking comic Christmas cards nearly a month after the release of his breakthrough hardcover, *Louis Riel: A Comic-Strip Biography*. "Most people have forgotten the details. It was the same thing for me."

Want the scoop on Riel? Listen close—you can't make up fiction this good.

In 1873, literally hiding in the woods because of the price on his head, Riel was elected to serve as a

Member of Parliament. But he was worried about taking his seat in Ottawa with the \$5,000 bounty. A year later, with PM-in-waiting Alexander MacKenzie calling him a murderer, Riel was elected to parliament a second time, only to be turned back again by the sight of police at every door to the House of Commons. He believed fervently in self-determination for the west and was passionate about minority rights, including the rights of the minority British settlers living along the Red River beside the mostly French-speaking Métis.

Indeed, Riel was a captivating character. He was a prophet and a martyr—or maybe a madman, depending on who you believe. Regardless, he crystallized practically everything Brown could ever ask for in a subject. Riel was at least as incredible as the protagonist of Brown's first major work, 1992's *Ed the Happy Clown*, which according to a comic book writer named the Two-Handed Man tells the story "of a luckless clown who awakens to find that the head of a miniature version of Ronald Reagan from a parallel dimension has affixed itself to his penis."

**LOUIS RIEL OPENS** with the backstory behind the North-West Rebellion. Flushed out by a maps, a bibliography and 23 pages of notes, Brown recounts what led to so much Métis resentment. (In a nutshell, blame politics and racism.) But he also pokes around Riel's psyche: educated in Montreal and articulate enough in English, he became a spokesman for his people when the Canadian surveyors arrived. Riel wasn't always a revolutionary; in fact, he favoured

conciliation over conflict and only accepted violence as a last resort.

Riel also saw himself as God's messenger and spent a few months in a lunatic asylum, a past that resonated with Brown, who in the mid-1990s explored his mother's mental illness in a comic called *My Mom Was a Schizophrenic*. With all these themes swirling around his head, Brown bounced the idea off his publisher, Chris Oliveros at Montreal-based Drawn and Quarterly, and the 10-issue serialized comic that evolved into this book was born. "If you're going to do nonfiction," Brown says, "doing something on someone's life—something that already has a storyline—makes sense."

## PROFILE GRAPHIC HISTORY

"He was a man who tried to do the best he could for his people and was willing to make sacrifices for that," continues Brown, himself a key figure in the comic renaissance of the 1980s, talking about the appeal of Riel as a literary character. "He had his negative points too: his quick temper and his ideological steadfastness. If he had a certain view, he had difficulty seeing the other side. Which is how most of us are, I suppose."

Initially, Brown agreed with the heroic image of Riel presented in the biography that kickstarted his idea, *Riel: A Life of Revolution* by Maggie Siggens. But his view of Riel became more conflicted throughout 10 months of reading and research; he didn't see Riel as a villain, but had trouble accepting him as an outright hero too.

These shades of gray are vital to

the black-and-white drawings of *Louis Riel*, a somber, moody style influenced heavily by Harold Gray's *Little Orphan Annie*. ("My work is looking more and more like his," says Brown. "It's a conscious thing. There is a real darkness to it. It's a bleak world he depicts. He never uses close-ups. The characters are not terribly expressive.") Case in point: when the provisional government headed by Riel decides to execute Thomas Scott for treason against the Red River Settlement in March 1870—a pivotal act that ultimately led to the prosecution of Riel—Riel silently stares blankly downward for a succession of Brown's panels. He is clearly a man in turmoil. He doesn't want to kill, yet he's told by his supporters that "Something has to be done. The guards are losing respect for you."

**IN ORDER TO CRAM** the entire Riel saga into 10 comics and a book shy of 300 pages, Brown took liberties with the facts. He outlines what he did in his foreword and notes: he skipped over long periods of time, concentrated on certain anecdotes, simplified relationships and created a few composite characters. "It was a balancing act, to be faithful to history but also to tell the story in the limited amount of space I had," Brown says. "I was expecting some historian to take me to task for something or other, not that I had anything specific in mind."

Not only has there been no academic backlash, but Brown has already received compliments from a pair of history teachers: one planned to use it at a Toronto college and the other said her high school students were actually getting the story because of the book.

Media reviews, meanwhile, have been excellent—the *Village Voice* wrote that "Brown has invented a biographical form unique to his medium" and the *Globe and Mail* named it one of the best books of the year—and sales have been strong. As of early December, Drawn and Quarterly had only 700 copies left from the first run of 6,000 books and was set to order a second run of 4,000 to 5,000 more.

**ALTHOUGH MUCH** of Brown's previous work has sold better in the United States than Canada, *Louis Riel* is having more success domestically. It's certainly not the first graphic novel to take on history or biography, Brown says, citing his attraction to a series of books by Texan Jack Jackson about historical figures in Texas. "But mainstream readers probably would not have seen a lot of these books," he says. Circa 2003, however, *Louis Riel* has been able to find a rather mainstream audience, which to Brown says a lot about graphic novels no longer being looked at as niche oddities. "When I did media interviews 10 years ago," he says, "I seemed to be always fighting the perception that comic books were a children's medium. That doesn't seem to be the case any more. There have been enough books that people accept this as a valid form of creative expression."

That said, Brown doesn't have to spend much time defending his art these days. His résumé and reviews speak for themselves. The beautiful possibility of kids picking up a book like *Louis Riel* (even if they're told to pick it up) and getting into history

SEE PAGE 14



# Fortress mentality

Jonathan Lethem blends comics, childhood and funk in *Fortress of Solitude*

By JOSEF BRAUN

Like a match struck in a darkened room: two white girls in flannel nightgowns and red vinyl roller skates with white laces, tracing tentative circles on a cracked blue slate sidewalk at seven o'clock on an evening in July.

The opening images of Jonathan Lethem's *The Fortress of Solitude* uncoil with a rhapsodically observant eye for moments

ever-receding into the dusty past, a hunger for clues trapped in the atmosphere, a willingness to peruse shards of memory for the detail in the detail in the detail, the element of the stray song that changed your life by revealing your freedoms, your limitations, your potential to identify with a sea of strange faces outside your window, or to withdraw from almost all of it.

The past being conjured in Lethem's latest (and in some ways most ambitious) novel belongs, among others, to Dylan Eddus. He's five years old when the novel begins and new to a Brooklyn neighbourhood yet to become gentrified where, once those angelic white girls move away, Dylan will be the only white kid on the block. *The Fortress of Solitude* begins in the late '60s and spans decades as well as both coasts of the U.S. as it dissects both the ever-changing pop-culture landscape and the increasingly subtle but omnipresent racial borders that can be detected in every cultural artifact and the defining objects of Dylan's development: Spirographs and Etch-a-Sketches, funk tunes and comic books. Thankfully, Lethem isn't merely drunk on nostalgia here (the references aren't sentimental); he lines the halls of memory with enough specific names of things come and gone to sanctify each specific moment hovering in time.

Dylan's childhood is defined by the presence of his vivacious bohemian mother; by his reclusive visual artist father, who soon resigns himself to a career painting sci-fi paperback covers while his great unseen film (a Stan Brakhage-esque painted-on-celluloid epic) is crafted frame by frame in the upstairs study; and by Mingus Rude, the mulatto son of almost-legendary soul singer Barrett Rude. Mingus befriends Dylan and the years of essential experiences he and Dylan share finally reveal just how much race—visible race—will interfere with their destinies.

In the first of *Fortress*' three parts, Lethem guides us through years of Dylan and Mingus's youth with a rather audacious focus on New York attitude and a breezy disinterest in clarifying the novel's themes or direction—those desperate to know where it's all going are just going to have to wait. But well over the halfway point in *Fortress*' 511 packed pages, following a sudden burst of violence that brings Dylan and Mingus's childhoods to a very abrupt close, Lethem starts to let us in on the bigger picture in a brilliant 12-page transitional section entitled "Liner Note" which informs us roughly what became of Dylan, Mingus and Barrett Rude in the form of a CD box set essay. (This section also reveals Lethem's secondary calling as a musicologist, as he traces a part factual/part fictional account of the shifts in soul music in the 1970s.)

**FORTRESS, LIKE LETHEM'S** previous breakthrough novel *Motherless Brooklyn* concerns itself with orphans and handicaps and drugs and enforced loneliness, with clumsy but lucky detective work and things locked in memory. It contains a wildly fantastical element

and, the sole writer who wasn't over 60 or dead, Jonathan Lethem, whose *Gun, With Occasional Music*, a wicked blend of Dick, Raymond Chandler and something entirely new, sparkled with a freshness and a swagger all its own.

That Lethem has achieved the rare trick of finding success beyond

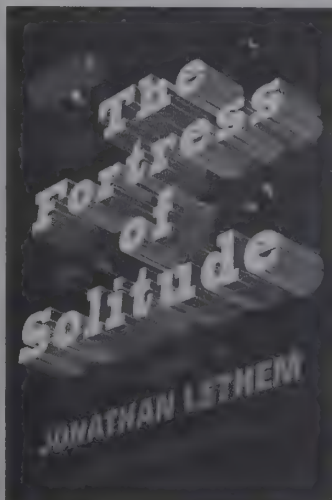
the genre ghetto (only Ballard has ever done the same, with *Empire of the Sun*) while keeping his integrity intact and consistently improving as a writer is inspiring but unsurprising. Lethem has been dismantling aesthetic boundaries all along and has now come closer than ever to making them practically invisible.

*The Fortress of Solitude* wobbles just slightly upon a bevy of tangled literary aspirations, but it stands nonetheless as one of the very best novels of the year. ●

THE FORTRESS OF SOLITUDE

By Jonathan Lethem • Doubleday • 541 pp. • \$34.95

## REVUE BOOKS



taken directly from comic books, yet it interweaves this element in such a slippery way that it never encroaches on the novel's overall feeling of verisimilitude. It's the book Lethem could never have written before *Motherless Brooklyn*'s success and, deservedly, it has already placed him in the upper echelon of contemporary American novelists.

Some years back when I was searching for sci-fi novels that would spare me the cleavage and space-ships and shitty dialogue and load me up with the juicy, mind-boggling themes (the fragility of identity and memory, alienation, paranoia) that I longed for, a handful of authors comprised my must-read list: Philip K. Dick, J.G. Ballard, Ursula K. LeGuin, Stanislaw Lem, Alfred Bester

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# Octopus' guardian

Controversy magnet Zhauna Alexander inks a new novel, *Love Is an Octopus*

By PENNY CHOLMONDELEY

According to Zhauna Alexander, I am Amelia Blue. She makes this diagnosis within moments of meeting me. To be honest, I am spooked. After all, Amelia—the central character of Alexander's latest novel, *Love Is an Octopus*—is a manic-depressive incest survivor. Not exactly the kind of off-the-cuff compliment a girl waits her whole life to hear.

It quickly becomes apparent, however, that it's not a visible sign of mental illness or transparent emotional scarring that Alexander is referring to. She's identified the physical shape Amelia takes in her own mind—an apparition with dark hair and few remarkable or outstanding features. The girl-next-door type that the neighbours never suspect possesses deep, seething secrets.

Alexander's reputation as an out-of-bounds and unconventional artist precedes her. Theatregoers will recognize her as the author of *Zeno's Deli*, *Cake and Pigs*, the graphic and controversial trilogy of plays whose ability to attract sold-out houses despite widespread critical derision made her the envy of her fellow Fringe artists. Alexander is also an award-winning filmmaker (*Smear*, *The Good Samaritan*) and composer.

No surprise, then, that I expected to arrive at the interview and find her shouting obscenities and crawling along the coffee shop floor in a duct-tape bra. Instead, she is calm and charming, welcoming me with a gripping hug. Could this woman be

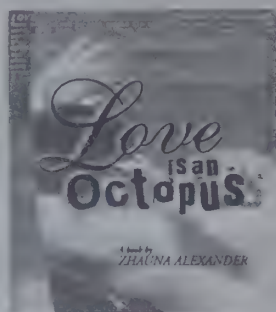
the real-life inspiration for her fictional heroine?

It's not too great a leap to confuse the two. Like Amelia, Alexander was a child prodigy and was always conscious that she was not entirely normal. She insists, however, that although the book is written in first-person, it is not autobiographical. Alexander may be extreme and quirky, but she is not Amelia. "This isn't about me. People don't get it," she says with a slightly incredulous tone. "I come out in a more abstract way with the

## PROFILE BOOKS

choices that I make about the characters and what happens in the book. That's the 'me' part."

Readers were first introduced to Amelia in *Amelia's Aquarium*. Unconventionally packaged as a deck of 64 cards which readers were encouraged to shuffle and play the



cards life had dealt to her tragic heroine, *Aquarium* raised questions about the very definition of a book. Alexander's style is minimalist and at times jarring, much like the dialogue between her characters.

"Amelia is terribly unlucky," she says. "She is a flawed character. She is ambiguous, confused and her hon-

esty is in some ways offensive.... There is a craziness apart from the mental illness. I think it is like a loss of control, a whirlwind."

**LOVE IS AN OCTOPUS** was written to satisfy the author's own curiosity about what fate had in store for Amelia. "It took me four years to finish," Alexander says. "Two years of being pregnant with the book, and two years of actually writing it. And then I realized I had a lot more freedom than I thought I did. I mean, who says I have to write the book like everybody else writes it? I can write it any damn way that I please."

The end result is a novel in which Amelia, now 30, exposes her trust issues and toys with her audience. When she describes her relationships with other characters or past events it's unclear whether she is being entirely honest. "She's fucking with the reader—she's not being perfectly good to the reader," elaborates Alexander, adding that she wasn't trying to make the character seem malignant, but more believable. "She's playing with them because she doesn't know how else to be."

Alexander, like her heroine, has also struggled with identity and what it means to be a writer. After a brief stab at journalism during college, she returned to writing poetry, a craft she felt allowed her more freedom and complemented her abstract style. Despite having self-published a book prior to *Amelia's Aquarium* and her notoriety in Edmonton's alternative scene, she didn't feel like she could truly claim writing as her profession until the ink was dry on *Love Is an Octopus*. "Now I can say that I honestly feel like a writer," she quips. "I passed the test." ☺

**LOVE IS AN OCTOPUS**  
By Zhauna Alexander • Tessera Books  
• 130 pp. • \$17.95

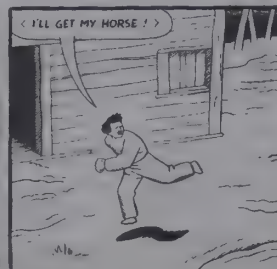
## Chester Brown

Continued from page 12

through narratives and characters says a lot, too. Other graphic novelists could decide to dive into history if this book sells well. And none of this praise, this potential, takes into account the political and social message of *Louis Riel*, which had the power to transform Brown's own worldview. "When I began this book," he says, "I was an

anarchist. My original intention was to make people more suspicious of government and less trusting of it. But I'm not an anarchist anymore. I'm still concerned about freedom and how large institutions affect it. But at this point I realize there's a need for government—at least to some degree." ☺

**LOUIS RIEL:  
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## print culture

BY CHRISTOPHER WIEBE

### Non-fic coating

We all know by now that writers of fiction and poetry cannot make a living from their writing and historically have had to support themselves with "day jobs": Al Purdy as a mattress tester, Duncan Campbell Scott as Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs. But surely can't writers of *nonfiction*—good, truthful, useful stuff—make their way in the world?

Think again. The old chestnut that fiction, despite its prestige, doesn't sell and that nonfiction keeps publishers afloat, doesn't hold true with Canadian books. Two big publishers of Canadian nonfiction, Stoddart and Macfarlane Walter and Ross, have gone out of business in roughly the past year. Roy MacSkimming's new book *The Perilous Trade: Publishing Canada's Writers* shows how the economics of delivering these titles in a small market subject to low-international pricing is a deadly recipe.

Canada's nonfiction writing community, in fact, is in crisis. Publishers are cutting their lists or collapsing altogether, the mainstream public affairs trade magazines are disappearing (*The Walrus* and *Maisonneuve* to the contrary), leaving a shrinking number of homes for literary and investigative journalism. Magazines and book publishing are part of an interlocking whole, as Noah Richler recently pointed out—and if the magazines die, where will support and development for current and future writers of nonfiction come from?

If you're flirting with the idea of making a living as a freelance writer, talk first to Calgary writer Andrew Nikiforuk, whose book *Saboteurs: Wiebo Ludwig's War Against Big Oil*, a extraordinary work of investigative and narrative nonfiction, won the 2002 Governor-General's Award for nonfiction. In an article commenting on the demise of his publisher MW&R he talked of how the award did nothing for sales of his book, and that he may have to quit full-time writing because he can't make a living. Begging the question, how do peers like Curtis Gillespie or Myrna Kostash make a go of it?

Small wonder, then, that the Creative Non-Fiction and Cultural Journalism program run every summer at the Banff Centre for the past decade shimmers like an opalescent Xanadu for Canada's mid-career and senior nonfiction writers. For a month, eight writers and two editors are paid to retreat to the mountain redoubt and temporarily ignore the bleak realities of the marketplace. In the quiet of a Leighton Studio they can delve deeply into a longer nonfiction article.

Ted Bishop, a U of A English professor and winner of many magazine

awards, talks about being "ruined for life" by his stimulating, supportive experience at Banff. "Working so closely with an editor I trusted was a completely novel experience," he says. "A good editor should be a tugboat keeping you on the beam, rather than leading you." Moira Farr, author of *After Daniel: A Suicide Survivor's Tale* and an editor at Banff for three summers running, adds, "You're there with seven other writers, critical in the best way, and you are really opening yourself up. Most of us would never get the opportunity to have eight really qualified people read your work and comment on it."

The Banff Centre Press has published four collections of articles generated by the program. The most recent offering, *Word Carving: The Craft of Literary Journalism*, edited by Farr and Ian Pearson, brings together articles by Philip Marchand, Katherine Ashenburg and 10 others. Bishop's article, inspired

ing at Carleton University, "the distinction is in the way the writing is crafted, the way it pushes language beyond being a mere communication tool." It also must free itself from the magazine writing formula (opening scene and theme, followed by alternation between narrative, colour and fact) and develop a unique, quirky voice. When Bishop thinks of literary nonfiction, he points to books like Ronald Wright's *Time Among the Maya* and Witold Rybczynski's *The Most Beautiful House in the World*. "These books combine research and narrative: a narrative arc, scenes and character shaping," he says. "They are all trying to render the experience, immerse the reader, not report it like a warehouse inventory."

History has handed nonfiction writers a curious reversal. Such was the appetite for the printed word that late-Victorian weeklies in London had to scramble to fill an embarrassment of column inches (read them, dear reader, and behold the verbiage). Today we find quite the opposite: too much writing vying for dwindling space. And as the space goes, so does the appetite of the readership—as with healthcare, if you naturalize the eroded offerings, people come to expect less.

"Finding a place to publish reliably, or developing some kind of a regular rhythm of writing—these things can't be done in Canada today," Farr says. "That's why I think the Banff program is such a wonderful shock for its participants." It shows them an alternate mode of production, and fosters much needed friendship and community. ●

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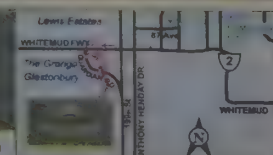


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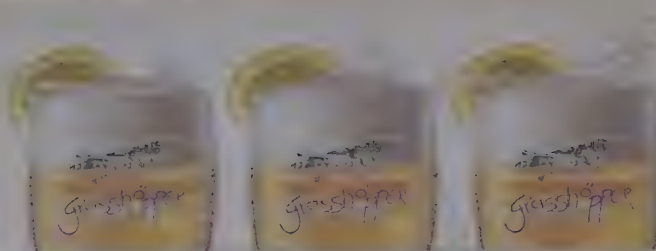
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# Sunshine



Photo courtesy of Sunshine

On a hill full of double back diamonds, the Strawberry Chair only damages male egos

BY AMBER BOWERMAN

As we settled into the gondola at Sunshine Village on the last Saturday of November, my husband and I discussed the conditions on the hill and, with increasing importance, our mortality.

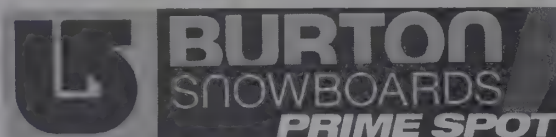
The wind was howling something fierce, rocking our gondola car like a stubborn piñata. The snowboards jostled in the outside bins, threatening to fall out and plummet through the thick fog to the hill below. Through frosty glass we saw a heavy, sunless sky and no hint the snow would let up anytime soon.

"It's great, eh," said our beaming gondola-mate, a mellow young boarder from Canmore.

"Uh, yeah," I replied with trepidation. "Great."

For beginners like me, riding a swaying and seemingly endless gondola to get to the base of a ski hill is a tad intimidating. However our co-rider—who was already enjoying his sixth day at Sunshine this year—assured us it was a perfect day to get started for the season.

Two-thirds of the way up Goat's Eye Mountain, we picked up another pas-



senger. His beard was crusted with ice, his cheeks were scarlet and the air in the car dropped a degree or two when he blew in wet and cold. But he was smiling from ear to frozen ear and, like our other co-passenger, he professed that the conditions on the hill—though bone-chilling at times with the wind-chill factor—were some of the best he'd seen. In fact, they were downright "awesome" for so early in the season.

Apparently, despite the blustering cold, Chris and I had picked the perfect day to try to improve our fledgling snowboarding skills.

A 15-MINUTE DRIVE from the Banff townsite, Sunshine Village boasts 107 runs spread out over three mountains: Goat's Eye, Standish and Lookout. It's a behemoth of a ski area with a lift capacity of 20,000 people per hour. Renowned for its all-natural snow (none of that manmade stuff), Sunshine Village sees about 33 feet of white gold every year. We were incredibly lucky to arrive on the heels of a major

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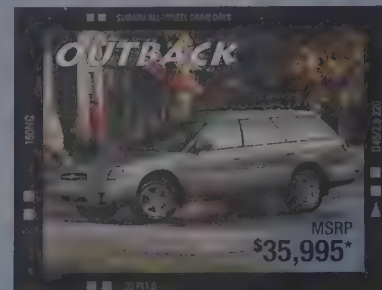
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## SNOWZONE

early season dumping, which left a base of about 104 centimetres and a soft, albeit cold, cushion to fall on.

For beginners, about 20 per cent of Sunshine's terrain is "easy." Chris and I spent most of the day on the Strawberry Chair—though he found the name mildly damaging to his male ego. A new green run called "Borderline" was unveiled this season and is accessible from the brand-new Standish Quad Chair. It's ideal for snowboarders.

Intermediate skiers and boarders have about 55 per cent of the hill at their disposal, providing a family-friendly cornucopia of runs. The other 25 per cent of the hill is where boarders and skiers who eat chicks like me for breakfast spend their time: the expert areas and extreme terrain. Four new double black diamond runs—yeah, that's *double* black diamond—are open on Goat's Eye Mountain in an area previously considered backcountry. "Rene-gade," "Stampede," "Saddledome" and the perhaps aptly named "Think Again" runs are now part of the more than 3,300 acres of skiable terrain monitored and controlled by Sunshine's mountain operations team. Skiers and boarders who choose to venture into those areas are bound by the same rules as they are on Sunshine's infamous Delirium Dive: they need to go with a buddy, take a shovel and equip themselves with an avalanche transceiver—and even so, they can only go when conditions are good.

That's a lot of ground to cover, so Sunshine offers free tours of the area, departing at 10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. daily. There's no need to book ahead. Just show up a few minutes early and join the group that best matches your ability. Group and private lessons and skills clinics are also offered and highly recommended, especially for hill hacks like me.

**ABOUT HALFWAY THROUGH** the day, Chris and I decided to take a break and head for lunch at one of Sunshine's nine restaurants. Right next door to the day lodge in the heart of the "village" is the luxurious

Sunshine Village Inn. The 82-room hotel is the only "ski-in, ski-out" hotel in Banff National Park. More than half of Sunshine's lifts are within walking distance of the lobby. We opted for the inn's cozy Chimney Corner Lounge—the coffee's hot, the pizza's great and the view of the village is inspiring, save for the odd wipe-out by an overzealous skier or boarder.

Once we'd warmed ourselves by the stone fireplace and filled our bellies, we headed back out alongside a slope-weary family. They unstrapped their skis and boards, took three or four steps, stomped the snow off their boots and strolled into their hotel. At 7,200 feet, they were home for the day—and we still had to rely on our burning, ever-weakening legs to somehow get us down the hill.

When the lifts ground to a halt later that afternoon, we decided to take our chances on the ski-out. We hadn't waited in line for more than two or three minutes all day—until we tried to get off the hill. Luckily, a couple of seasoned skiers gave Chris and me the hot tip of the day. Rather than getting stuck in one of the flattest spots on the hill, they advised us to take the Jackrabbit Chair up a ways, build some momentum and cruise the rest of the way down. It sounded easy enough, but the Banff Avenue run was jammed with people and we had to sit down from time to time to let the crowds clear.

If you can't comfortably maneuver around other skiers and snowboarders, you might want to head down a bit early to avoid the alpine rush hour—or take the gondola back. The sweet payoff came for me when I rounded the last sharp corner and saw the parking lot full of idling cars. I double-checked that I was in one piece, located Chris—who was unstrapping his board (humbled by the snaky journey down)—and breathed a sigh of relief.

Not bad, I thought, for a couple of rookies. ☺

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### SNOWZONE



ski  
tips

By COLIN CATHREA

#### Arrive alive

Tailights in the river? Sammy the tow truck driver has seen it all. "It's a total Gong Show," he says. "Eighty-five per cent of the cars in the ditch are four-wheel drives. People are so stupid."

Sammy has many stories to scare the daylight out of you. We're having a morning coffee at the Castle Mountain Resort's general store and Lake Louise-based Sammy's Towing has had a very busy weekend.

It started with a storm on the last Friday of November that dumped 50 centimetres of powder on the mountains around Banff and coated the highways with a dangerously icy sheen. En route from Edmonton, we turned off Highway 2 at Airdrie to bypass Calgary. About 20 kilometres west we saw the first set of emergency lights. The RCMP told us to turn around and head back through Calgary. "We have two snowplows in the ditch," the officer told us. "The wind is blowing over 100 kilometres/hour and it blew the plows right off the road. It doesn't matter how slow you go, you're taking your life in your hands."

Calgary, here we come!

The drive was okay until we hit the national park gates. After handing over almost \$100 for an annual park pass, we started into a blinding storm. That's when the Rav 4 blew past us and parked itself in the ditch a few hundred metres down the road. The two girls got out and stared in total disbelief, wondering how such a catastrophe could befall their indestructible four-wheel drive. "It's going to be a long wait for the tow

truck," we assured them after making sure everyone was alright.

We knew that our accommodations at the Castle Mountain Chalets ([castlemountain.albertanetwork.com](http://castlemountain.albertanetwork.com)), a serene collection of log cabins and lodges located halfway between Banff and Lake Louise beside the Bow River, were waiting about 50 kilometres away and figured a constant cruising speed of around 60 or 70 would get us there in one piece. The beautiful drive down the parkway had a viewing distance of about 50 metres. I tried the brights just to see what would happen and the visibility dropped to zero. The Bow River comes very close to the highway in a few spots and a couple of cars got a free mountain wash. Well, not so free when you add in the cost of damages and towing. As I said earlier, Sammy had a busy weekend. Fortunately no one was badly injured in the baths in the river.

"You wouldn't believe what I've seen in the last two days," Sammy said. "The road up to the Lake Louise ski hill was jammed with vehicles. On guy broke down near the bottom and pulled off to the side of the road. Right after that, some idiots park right behind him and start walking up to the hill. I couldn't get the tow truck behind him!"

After shooting the bull with our tow truck-driving pal, we headed out. As we approached the junction of Highway 93 to Radium and the Bow Valley Parkway, we saw a car buried in the ditch after crashing into a sign. It was a rental four-wheel drive, and it was smashed up pretty good. The three young tourists from Japan were unhurt and looked totally bewildered. We stopped to check their status. I decided to take a picture. They posed!

With everyone accounted for and in good shape, we went back to get Sammy. We explained how they went up the exit ramp, through a stop sign and a pile of graded snow, over the highway, into a big sign and finally into the ditch. Sammy smiled and started walking to his truck. "Thanks, guys," he said. "I told you, it's a freakin' Gong Show." ●

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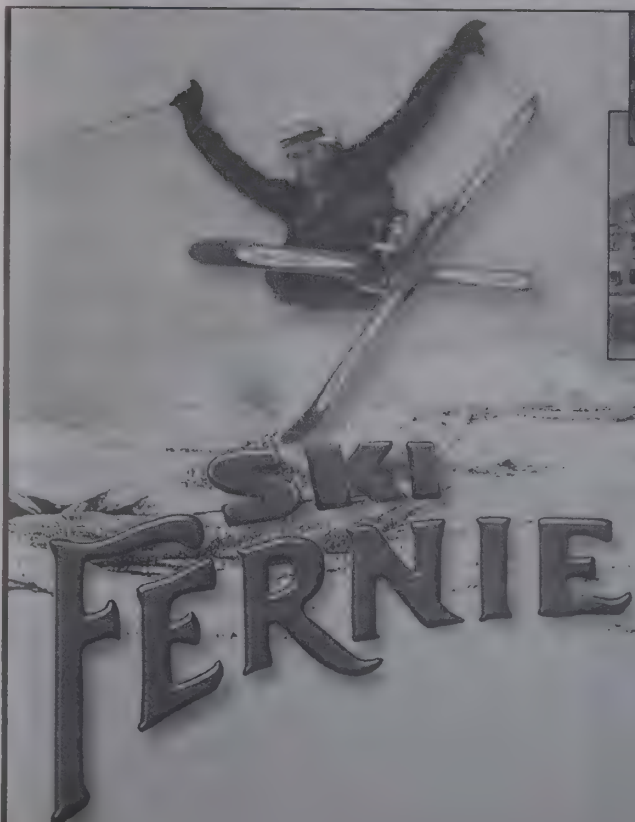
**Photos and styling:** Francis Tétrault ([www.blacklabphotography.com](http://www.blacklabphotography.com)) • **Photo assistant:** Lisa • **Models:** Grayson and Hailey • **Agency:** Mode Models • **Location:** Snow Valley • **Additional styling:** Easy Rider's Mike Ethier, Miranda Watson and Doug from Pacesetter

① Hailey's Bonfire sherpa toque from Pacesetter, Karbon top from Pacesetter; Grayson's Bonfire toque from Pacesetter, Oakley jersey from Pacesetter;

② Hailey's Nixon toque from Easy Rider;

③ Grayson's Oakley jersey from Pacesetter;

④ Hailey's Billabong sweater from Easy Rider; Grayson's Vulcom Soggy Mornin' fleece from Easy Rider



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# The EASYRIDER Condition Report

## Local

Rabbit Hill - 60cm base, 0cm of new snow, 40% of runs in operation  
Snow Valley - 60cm base, 0 cm of new snow, all lifts open

## Alberta

Castle Mt. - 53-158cm base, 5cm of new snow, all lifts and 55 runs open  
C.O.P. - 85cm base, 0cm of new snow  
Fortress - Opening Dec 12, 75-103cm base  
Lake Louise - 90-122cm base, 12cm of new snow, all lifts open  
Marmot Basin - 50cm base, 9cm of new snow, 6 lifts and 42/84 runs open  
Mt. Norquay - Opening Dec.12, 70cm base 4/5 lifts open  
Nakiska - 68cm of new snow, 10cm of new snow, 4/5 lifts and 23/29 runs open  
Sunshine - 103cm base, 14cm of new snow, all lifts and 80 runs open

## B.C.

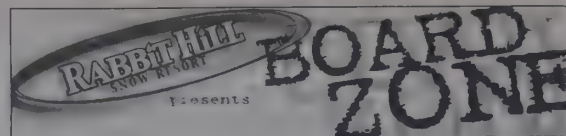
Apex - 124cm base, 6cm of new snow  
Big White - 109cm base, 0cm of new snow, 8/13 lifts open  
Chrystal Mt - 68cm base, 1/3 lifts open  
Fernie - 143cm base, 44cm of new snow, 3/10 lifts and 50/107 runs open  
Fairmont - Opening Dec 19  
Kicking Horse - Opening Dec 12, 70-120cm base  
Kimberley - Opening Dec 18, 78cm base, 34cm of new snow  
Mt Washington - 144cm base, 4cm of new snow, 7/8 lifts open  
Panorama - Opening Dec 12, 80cm base, 26cm of new snow  
Powder King - Opening Dec 18  
Powder Springs - Opening Dec 12-14, 90cm base, 24cm of snow  
Red Mountain - Opening Dec 13, 115cm base, 20cm of new snow  
Silver Star - 86cm base, 2cm of new snow  
Sun Peaks - 68cm base, 9/9 lifts & 100/114 trails open  
Whistler Blackcomb - 147cm base, 15/33 runs and 120/200 trails open  
Whitewater - 150cm base, 22cm of new snow, all lifts open

## U.S.A.

Big Mt - 124cm base, 28cm of new snow, 5 lifts open  
Big Sky - 76cm base, 2cm of new snow, 7/17 lifts and 26/150 trails open  
49 Degrees - 48cm base, 4cm of new snow, 45 runs open  
Great Divide Ski Area - 76cm base, 1cm of new snow, 3/6 lifts open  
Lookout Pass - 96cm base, 10cm of new snow  
Mt Spokane - 66cm base, 1cm of new snow, 32 runs open  
Schweitzer Mt - 96cm base, 0cm of new snow  
Silver Mt- 83cm base, 8cm of new snow, 6/7 lifts open  
Sun Valley - 93cm base, 6cm of new snow, 5/20 lifts open

All conditions accurate as of Dec 10, 2003

## SNOWZONE



By ALEXA LOO

## How I got on board

As I peeled off the layers of my team uniform after a fantastic day of training at Nakiska earlier this fall, I thought back fondly to my first day of snowboard training so many years ago....

It was a snowy weekend in Whistler. I looked up the phone number for the Blackcomb Ski Club and inquired about gate training for snowboarders. I was directed to a local snowboard coach who encouraged me to come out and train with his team. The next day I showed up at the top of the mountain with my new snowboard in tow and my hopes high. The coach took one look at me, wrinkled his nose and asked, "Where is your race board?"

Little did I know that the gear is different for racing than for riding powder. For racing you need hard shell boots that are similar to ski boots but offer more lateral flex than ski boots. Racing bindings are usually made of metal or a combination of plastic and metal and come in step-in

competitors race head-to-head down parallel courses in knockout rounds.

The new format is a lot of fun. There are two identical courses, one red and one blue, set next to each other. At the top are two sets of start gates that open after a series of lights and beeps, just like the start in drag racing. If the racer tries to "barge"—i.e., to go before the gates open—she will find herself hung up like laundry on the line. The start gates are conveniently located just above the knees to give maximum effect when competitors try to barge. We all got a few good laughs during the first few World Cups as a number of the competitors were trying to get the hang of the new start gates.

The field is split in half, with the even-numbered bibs racing in the blue course and the odds in the red. Once the gates open, the timers start. Passing through the finish line stops the timer. The top 16 finishers from each course go back to the top and race again. The times from both runs are added together and the 16 fastest competitors advance to the finals.

For the finals, the top qualifier is pitted against the slowest qualifier, second

Alexa Loo races for Canada's national snowboard team, which is competing in a World Cup meet in Whistler from December 11 to 14. She finished third in the 2003 national championships. Look for more Board Zone columns from Loo in the weeks ahead.



or manual operation styles. Snowboard bindings are designed to hold the boots tight to the board and not release. The racing boards themselves are longer, narrower and stiffer than my favourite powder board. The boards are designed to go in one direction (go figure), have one tip and are squared off on the back end.

The Blackcomb Snowboard Club loaned me a race board for my first few training sessions; I was hooked so quickly that I immediately bought my own race board. I loved learning how to carve the board and maneuver through the courses. At the end of that season, I competed in my first race, finishing fourth in the B.C. provincial championships.

Back in 1995, snowboard racing was still trying to emulate ski racing and we competed in a two-run, combined-time giant slalom event, carving around the tall ski gates. Since then, snowboard racing has undergone a number of changes. The gates are now triangular, which better accommodate the banked-in stance of the riders. The events have evolved from the two-run, ski-style giant slalom and slalom formats to the new parallel format where

against 15th and so on. In the first run of each knockout round the competitors leave the start gate at the same time. The first athlete through the finish line in the second run moves on to the next round. The field is thus reduced from 16 to eight to four. The final four compete to get into the "big final" and race for the gold. The athlete who makes it into the top four has to complete a total of 10 race runs, a long day by any sport's standards. The new parallel format, which is exciting to race and watch, is a test of both skill and endurance.

At the end of my first season I was really excited about racing. The feel of carving through the turns, the thwack of the gates, the camaraderie of the team and the challenge of the competition—I loved it all. When the International Olympic Committee announced that snowboard racing would be an Olympic discipline, I was even more excited.

Much to my parents' chagrin, I handed my chartered accountant certificate to my father and moved up to Whistler to pursue a new goal: the Olympics. I haven't been there yet. Experts say it takes 10 years to produce an Olympic athlete, so I think I'm on track for Italy in 2006. ●

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# Tawatinaw Valley

Like father, like son  
an hour north  
of the city

BY HART GOLBECK

In the Cree language it means "valley between two hills." But for local boarders and skiers, it's "Tawatinaw Valley—the best little hill in this neck of the woods."

Located an hour north of Edmonton just off Highway 2, Tawatinaw appeared on the scene way back in 1966. After watching his father operate the hill for 35 years, Perry Prazak took over and now manages the show. His philosophy is simple and aimed right at the onslaught of the ever-increasing boarder crowd: "If you build it, they

will come."

The elevation at Tawatinaw is similar to that of Rabbit Hill, but it has more skiable terrain, with 24 runs ranging from beginner to intermediate and even a couple of black diamonds. Two T-bars and a rope-

## AREA

tow service the hill, but that first number will increase by one next year as the old Fireweed T-bar from Sunshine settles into its new home.

Prazak believes that creating an terrain park and staging big air events is the way to go and, if last year is any indication, he's right. A three-metre high jump with a 12-metre gap had riders from Rabbit Hill, Snow Valley and as far away as Calgary launching for at least 20

metres before touching down

At least three events are planned for the new year at Tawatinaw and I'll keep you informed in Fall Lines as the dates get finalized. One team event is in the works this year again; it's called the King of the Hill contest. Teams of four, which must include at least one female, will challenge the slopes on skis, snowboards, snowblades and a GT Racer. I hope there are lots of bumps on the course because I'm going just to see the GT Racers launch themselves. (Do they make them with roll bars?)

For those of you who like to stay on the flats, there are also 20 kilometres of cross-country trails groomed for both classic and skating style. The hill opened on December 6 and they'll be setting the trails this week. ☉



fall  
lines

BY HART GOLBECK

## An avalanche of danger

Last year's avalanche season was the worst ever for western Canadian backcountry skiers, boarders and snowmobilers. In total, 27 snow enthusiasts lost their lives in the mountains of Alberta and B.C. Once again, conditions are high to extreme as backcountry skiers and boarders embark on their annual adventures. Snow Zone has a few words of advice if you're going off the beaten track in search of the ultimate

face shots: get some training, stay informed and stay safe.

## Rest + rehab = medals

As reported a few weeks ago, Spruce Grove's Jennifer Heil has returned to the World Cup circuit after a much-needed season off for rest and rehabilitation. Apparently it was just what the doctor ordered, as Heil captured a silver medal in the season's opening mogul event in Finland. Down south, Hermann Maier continued his amazing comeback by capturing gold in a World Cup downhill at Vail, Colorado. Maier, a.k.a. "the Herminator," is returning after a motorcycle crash that nearly Herminated his ski career. The previous weekend at Lake Louise, he started the season with a bang by taking top honours in the Super G.

## No winter on this green

For those of you who've relocated

here from Calgary and are wondering why we don't ever write about Wintergreen, here's the scoop. Wintergreen, as its name implies, hasn't had much snow in recent years, so Resorts of the Canadian Rockies—which also owns Lake Louise, Fernie and a handful of other resorts—has closed it down for good. From now on, it will serve only as a golf destination. ☉

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The Elephant and Castle on Whyte's

BY DAVE YOUNG  
AND JOHN TURNER

*It was another week of disappointing hockey with the Edmonton Oilers. Last Thursday saw a 1-0 loss to the Minnesota Wild. Then the Oilers barely beat the struggling Pittsburgh Penguins 4-3. That game was followed by a loss to the Carolina Hurricanes. With losses this season to the Avalanche, the Flames, the Sharks and now the Hurricanes, this season is looking even more like a disaster film festival. Or just a disaster.*

**John:** Thank God for teams like the Pittsburgh Penguins. Pittsburgh is an NHL franchise almost entirely stocked with AHL players, and they sit dead last in the standings. If it weren't for them, the Oil would have zero wins in their last eight starts. So Edmonton beat the worst team in the league in a close 4-3 game. Calgary beat that same team 6-1 the following night. Perhaps the tough game in Edmonton took too much out of the Penguins and they had nothing left in the tank when they faced the Flames. Or maybe the Flames are a hard-working hockey club and right now the Oilers are just coasting.

**Dave:** It just hurts to see the Flames and the Maple Leafs on a hot streak and the Oilers struggling.

**John:** Let's recap the past week here in the Heartland of Mediocrity, if I may borrow a phrase coined by our old friend Dave. Edmonton lost to Minnesota, a team they used to beat regularly, and to Carolina. The 3-2 score in the latter game is flattering to the Oil, considering they only showed up for the last

Western Conference team. The first lap of the playoff race starts Friday.

**John:** The only thing that has provided any sort of entertainment at the home games for the last couple of weeks has been the Copper Crew. For those who don't know, the Copper Crew is a bevy of attractive young females who throw out T-shirts and other prizes to the fans during pauses in the game. But as J.D., another friend

**Thank God for teams like the Pittsburgh Penguins.**

**If it weren't for them, the Oil would have zero wins in their last eight starts.**

four minutes. So how can Edmonton fix this sinking ship? They're definitely not working as hard as they should and their special teams are even worse than they were last week, with their power play dropping to 28th in the league. I'm starting to think that some of the problems might be with the coaching staff because they're obviously not getting through to the players.

**Dave:** Coach MacTavish had better get his team organized because starting Friday in Phoenix every game the Oilers play in December is against a

of mine, pointed out, they too have lost the plot over the past couple of weeks—they're more enthralled by looking at themselves on the big screen than they are in entertaining the fans. Perhaps the problems affecting the Oil right now run throughout the entire organization. And by the way, what's with the one or two-sentence statements this week?

**Dave:** I'm just putting in an Oiler-style effort this week. If the poor play continues, I'll try and write next week using only grunts and stickman drawings. ☹



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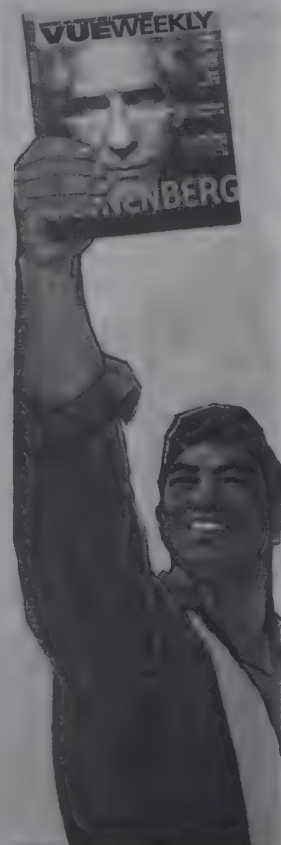
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### Billiard Club

10505 Whyte Ave (upstairs), 432-0335  
Black and White on Whyte: Formal; \$25 (includes hors d'oeuvres, champagne, dancing)

### Black Dog Freehouse

10425 Whyte Ave, 439-1082  
Jerry Jerry and the Sons of Rhythm; 10pm; \$12

### Blues on Whyte

10329-82 Ave, 439-3981  
Sam Cockrel and the Groove; no cover; champagne at midnight

### Bust Loose

### New Year's Eve Gala Tour

468-3087  
Club crawl; phone for information

### Casino Edmonton

7055 Argyll Rd, 463-9467  
Colleen Rae, Cornerstone (country/rock)

### Casino Yellowhead

12464-153 St, 424-9467  
Corral Banquet Room: dinner, DJ and special appearances by Robin Kelly and Martin Andrews (tribute to Elvis Presley and Rod Stewart); \$26.96 (adv)

### Cowboys

10102-180 St, 481-8739  
The Ice Festival: with DJ Sony, DJ Greg; 7pm (door); \$10 (adv)/\$15 (door)

### Celebrations Dinner Theatre

Oasis Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd, 448-9339  
Buffet dinner, the musical comedy *Indiana Bones and the Curse of the Mummy*, dance with DJ after the play; \$79.95 (includes party favours, glass of champagne at midnight, midnight snack)

### Crown and Derby

Oasis Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd, 448-9339  
Live entertainment; 7pm (door); \$10 (includes appetizer buffet, party favours, glass of champagne at midnight); tickets available at the door

### Delta Edmonton South Hotel

4404 Gateway Blvd, 434-6415/420-1757  
Orchestra Energia (12-piece Latin band) with Latin DJs; 6pm (door), 7:30pm (dinner), 9pm (dance); \$65 (dinner, dance, champagne, party favours, entertainment), \$40 (door, dance only), \$25 (advance, dance only). Deadline for purchasing dinner tickets is Monday, December 29; tickets available at Tix on the Square

### Downtown Edmonton

City Hall, Library and Streets around the Square, 423-2822  
New Year's Eve Downtown: Klondike Kate with her band Madison County inside City Hall; dance party on 99 Street; children's entertainment in the Stanley A. Milner Library; fireworks at midnight; 9pm-midnight; free

### The Druid

11606 Jasper Ave, 454-9928  
New Year's dinner, dance with DJ; 6:30 and 7:30pm (dinner), after 9pm (dance); \$20 (dance only), includes champagne and party favours; \$45 (prime rib buffet/dance), includes champagne and party favours

### Dusters

6402-118 Ave, 474-5554  
Glen Watkins; \$10 (buffet)

### Elephant and Castle on Whyte

10314-82 Ave, 439-4545  
The Swill Kings; \$10 (adv); tickets available at Elephant and Castle on Whyte

### Four Rooms Edmonton

Edmonton City Centre, 426-4767  
Kelly Alanna; \$40 (5pm, early dinner); \$75 (6:30-7:30pm dinner), includes jazz, midnight snack and champagne

### Gas Pump

10166-114 St, 488-4841  
Music by DJ Christian; 8pm-2am; \$35 (adv, dinner dance)/\$35 (dinner, dance); 6:30pm (door); \$15 (adv, dance only)/\$20 (dance only) (includes hors d'oeuvres and party favours)



Big Sugar play the Shaw Conference Centre

### Highrun Club

4926-98 Ave, 440-2233  
SIN; \$5 (adv), \$10 (door), includes party favours, champagne at midnight; dinner specials available

### Holy Trinity Anglican Church

10037-84 Ave, 420-1757  
De la New: Choral music presented by Ensemble de la Rue; 7:30pm (early evening only); door: \$15 (adult)/\$10 (student/senior), includes a glass of champagne at intermission; tickets available at TIX on the Square

### Iron Horse

8101-103 St, 438-1907  
Las Vegas theme featuring Las Vegas entertainers; semi-formal; \$25, includes party favours, midnight champagne, buffet appetizers (6-9pm); limited reserved seating before 8pm



# new years



**DINNER  
TICKETS \$40**  
GUARANTEED SEATING

**PARTY  
TICKETS \$20**  
DOORS 9:00 PM

DANCE YOUR WAY INTO 2004

**DJ FINNEGAN**

SPINS YOUR FAVES ALL NIGHT LONG  
CALL 414 6766 FOR DETAILS  
AND TO PURCHASE TICKETS  
DRESS CODE: CASUAL BUT CLASSY

more info to attend a  
**prime rib  
buffet \$45**  
seatings at 6:30 and 7:30pm

**party favours  
and dancing to  
follow**

every two people get a bottle of  
**champagne**  
**dance only \$20**

for party favours & champagne  
reservations apply

**10616 82 AVE  
414 6766**

**11606 jasper  
454 9928**



# NYE 2003

*A Celebration of Scruffy Murphy's!*

**A green tie affair. Irish Fancy**

**DINNER TICKET: \$35**  
(7PM AND 8PM SEATING)

**PARTY TICKET: \$20**  
(PARTY BEGINS AT 9PM)

**INCLUDES: PARTY FAVOURS  
DJ DANCING • CHAMPAGNE AT  
MIDNIGHT • IRISH WHISKY TOASTS  
ALL NIGHT • 1 AM SNACK BUFFET  
PRIZE FOR BEST GREEN TIE**

**Special Invite To...**

**JANUARY GOES INTO OVERTIME PARTY**

**Included with all NYE tickets:**

**485-1717  
WHITEMUD CROSSING  
[106 ST & WHITEMUD]**



## New Year's Eve Guide Continued from page 24



### The Joint

WEM, 486-3013

Hosted by Urban Metropolis with Harmon B and DJ Quake;  
\$25 (door)

### J.J.'s Pub

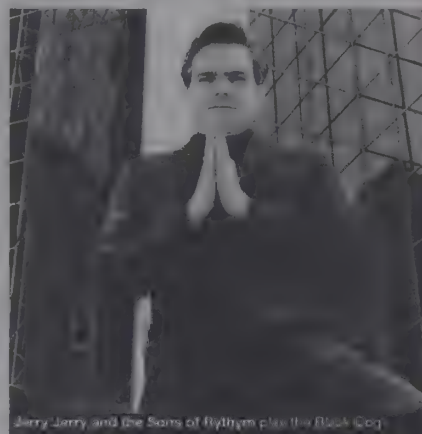
13160-118 Ave, 451-9180

Live Wire (rock music); 10pm; \$5

### Jasper Place Hotel

15326 Stony Plain Rd, 439-1906

Randy Hillman and Bob Rushton; 8pm; \$10 (adv)/\$13 (door)



*Jerry Jerry and the Sons of Rhythm play the Black Dog*

### Kingsknight Pub

9221-34 Ave, 433-2599

Stiff, karaoke; \$8

### L.B.'s Pub

111-23 Akins Dr, St. Albert, 460-9100

Look Twice; 7pm (door), 9:30pm (show); \$20 (adv), includes  
midnight lunch, party favours and champagne at midnight

### Longriders

11733-78 St, 479-7400

Classic Rock New Year's Bash: Delirium (former members of  
Face First); 7pm (door); \$10 (includes party favours and  
champagne at midnight)

### Manhattan Club

10345-105 St, 969-6969/451-8000

Baby Blue Sound Crew; 8pm; \$15; tickets available at TicketMaster

### Mayfield Inn

16615-109 Ave, 484-0821

Gala dinner and dance in the grand ballroom with music by  
the Pam Proud Band; 6:30pm; \$135 (includes buffet dinner  
and live play), \$87 (includes buffet dinner)

### New City Likwid Lounge

10079 Jasper Ave, 429-CLUB

New Year's Eve Inflation Party: with DJs Nik Rofeelya and  
Blue Jay; \$8

SEE PAGE 29

**VUEWEEKLY PRESENTS**

# NEW YEAR'S GIVEAWAY!

**WIN ONE OF THESE GREAT PRIZES!...**

**A \$100 IN GIFT CERTIFICATES COURTESY OF**



**B \$100 IN GIFT CERTIFICATES COURTESY OF**



**C GRAND PRIZE**

**INCLUDES ACCOMMODATION AT THE**

**Astoria Hotel**  
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**SKI TRIP FOR TWO  
TO JASPER**

**LIFT TICKETS AT**

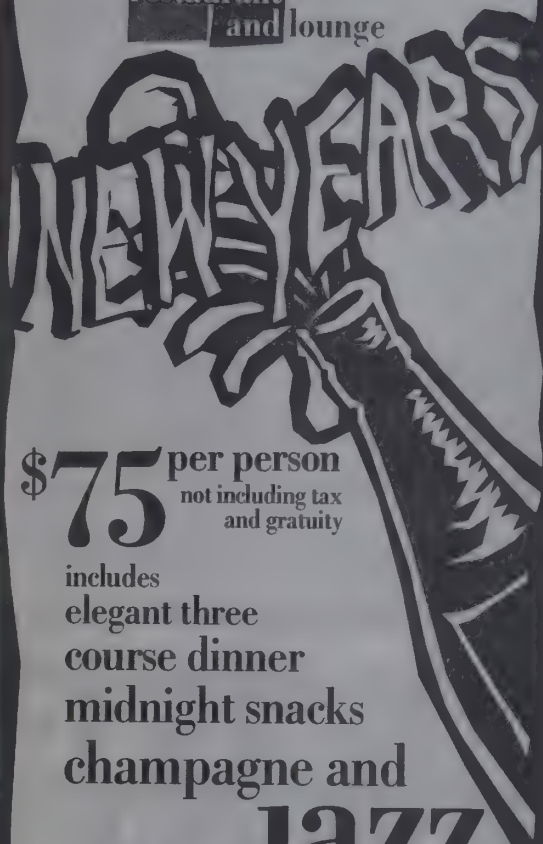


**TO ENTER SEND YOUR NAME AND DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER TO NEWYEARS@VUE.AB.CA OR FAX TO 780-426-2889**



four  
rooms

restaurant  
and lounge



\$75 per person  
not including tax  
and gratuity

includes  
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course dinner  
midnight snacks  
champagne and

featuring **Jazz**  
**kelly alanna**

four rooms  
restaurant and lounge

102 Ave. - 100th St.  
137th Avenue - 140th Street  
426-4767

new year's eve 2003  
**Swill Kings**  
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New Years  
With The  
Swill Kings  
The E & C  
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\$10 Advance  
\$15 @ Door

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439-4545



**VUEWEEKLY**  
YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S HAPPENING ON NEW YEARS EVE!





## NEW YEARS GALA

FEATURING



&

CONNECTED  
ENTERTAINMENT

DOORS 8 PM • TIX \$20 ADV

W.E.M. 486.3013

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CELEBRATE NEW YEARS  
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NEW CITY

10081 Jasper Ave. Paladium Bldg.  
call 429-CLUB for more info





Doug and the Slugs will be playing Red's on New Year's Eve

## Northlands Agricom

492-2116, e-mail vp.external@uadc.ca

Hourglass Ball: presented by the U of A Dance Club; ballroom dancing; formal attire; 5pm-2am; \$80 (includes four-course meal, dance performances, party favours)

## O'Byrne's

10616-82 Ave, 414-6766

Dance your way into 2004: with DJ Finnegan; casual but classy; \$40 (includes prime rib buffet dinner, party favours, a big bag of swag, bottle of champagne with every pair of tickets sold, midnight lunch and guaranteed seating); 6:30pm (door), 6:45pm (dinner); 8:45pm (last call for dinner); \$20 (includes party favours, big bag of swag, bottle of champagne with every pair of tickets sold and midnight lunch); 9pm (door)

## Overtime

10204-111 St, 423-1643

DJ, dance; 9pm; \$20

## Rattlesnake Saloon

9261-34 Ave, 438-8878

Sean Hogan (CCMA 2003 Roots Artist of the Year), the Clayton Bellamy Band (country); 7pm (door); \$15 (includes party favours; supper special available)

## Red's

WEM, 487-2066

Mardi Gras New Year Mega Bash: Doug and the Slugs, DJs Kenny K, David Stone; 8pm (door), 9:30pm (show); \$15 (first tickets); \$24.95 (adv); \$29.95 (day of); tickets available at Red's

## Rendezvous

10108-149 St, 444-1822

Texas Blood Money, Gate; 10pm; \$5

SEE PAGE 31

## VUE WEEKLY

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THE  
RIGHT  
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Advertisers who want to place their print ads in a quality publication ask the question: "Is your circulation audited?"

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ABC is the premier circulation auditing organization in the world, and has been since 1914. Each year, ABC auditors test and verify that our circulation figures are facts, not claims. An ABC audit is the sign of a sound investment for advertisers.

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Audit Bureau of Circulations

# COME CELEBRATE WITH US! CLASSIC ROCK NEW YEARS PARTY

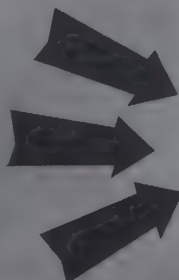
FEATURING

## DELIRIUM

FORMER MEMBERS OF FACEFIRST

DOORS  
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TICKETS ONLY \$10 { INCLUDES PARTY FAVOURS, DOOR PRIZES  
AND MIDNIGHT CHAMPAGNE



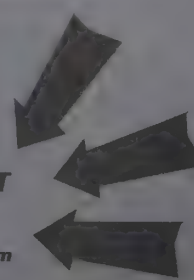
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Live Classic Rock  
Every Weekend,  
All Weekend



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EDMONTON, AB  
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EDMONTON'S HOTTEST NEW BANDS**

**SIN**

**TICKETS \$5 ADVANCE, \$10 AT DOOR**

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## New Years Party



**DRINK SPECIALS, HOURLY SPECIALS**



**DINNER SPECIALS \$12.95**

**8 OZ NY STEAK / CHICKEN CORDON BLEU / PRIMAVERA  
WITH CHICKEN & SHRIMP (INCLUDES CHEESECAKE)**

**COMPLEMENTARY PARTY FAVOURS  
AND CHAMPAGNE AT MIDNIGHT**

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SPONSORED BY: **MOLSON**



**WIN A TRIP FOR TWO  
VIVA LAS VEGAS**

**PLUS OTHER GREAT PRIZES**  
(YOU'VE GOT TO BE HERE TO WIN!)

**December 31, 2003**

**\$20 Ticket includes Dinner & Prize Draw**

**\$10 Ticket includes Prize Draw Only**

**Dinner Served Anytime After 6:00 pm**

**Champagne at Midnight**

**Karaoke & Dancing till 3am**



**11715C-108 AVE • 447-4727**



## New Year's Eve Guide

Continued from page 29



### The Roost

10345-104 St, 426-3150

Heavy Metal: A Rock and Roll Fantasy. Upstairs, new music; downstairs: retro music; rock attire; 7pm (door); \$10 (member)/\$12 (non-member), includes buffet dinner and party favours

### Rosario's Pub

11715C-108 Ave, 447-4727

Karaoke Central presents karaoke and dancing until 3am; \$20 (includes dinner, prize draw, champagne at midnight); \$10 (includes prize draw)

### St. Albert Alliance Church

Villeneuve Rd, 468-4432

Genesis 2004: Drenth, Eminence, The Gate; 9pm-2am; \$10 (adv)/\$13 (door); tickets available at Innovations Music, Victory Church on the Rock North-East, St. Albert Victory Life Church, Christian Publications, door

### Seedy's

10314-104 St, 421-0992

The Kasuals, The Operators 780; \$10

### Shaw Conference Centre

917-7670/451-8000

The Bear's New Year's Eve Bash 2004: Big Sugar, Exit 303, The Trews; 8pm; \$49.50; tickets available at TicketMaster

### Sidetrack Café

10333-112 St, 421-1326

The Superband; 5:30pm (cocktails, dinner (7-9pm)); \$50 (includes dinner, champagne and party favours)

### Thornton Court Hotel

99 St, Jasper Ave, 423-9999

\$199 (includes room with a view of the river, a rose, champagne, a box of truffles, three-course meal, reception and dance with band)

### Three Muskateers

10416-82 Ave, 437-4239

Five-course dinner; sparkling wine and party favours at midnight

### Urban Lounge

8111-105 St, 439-3388

New Year's Eve Party: Mustard Smile; \$20 (includes bottle of champagne at midnight); tickets available at Urban Lounge

### World Waterpark

West Edmonton Mall, 444-5321

New Year's Eve Family Beach Party: 6pm-midnight; \$49.95 (adv, family pass)/\$9.95 (each additional family member, up to three members)/\$19.95 (adv, individual pass)/\$59.95 (family pass)/\$24.95 (individual pass); includes musical entertainment, food and drink specials, fireworks at midnight; tickets available at the WEM guest services centre, main level, Phase II

### Your Apartment

120-101 St, 426-1977

Dietzche V. and the Abominable Snowman, Fake Cops, the Vertical Struts, AMN and guest DJs; \$5; tickets available at Blackbyrd, Listen



The Operators play Seedy's New Year's Eve

10

9

8

6

5

4

2

1

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

it's just not the same without us

We're open late from 10 PM to 1 AM

**PIZZA 73**

**473-7373**

Order online: [pizza73.com](http://pizza73.com)

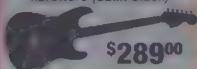




# Holiday

## Guitars

**Fender Squier Standard Double Fat Strat**  
with matching headstock & hardware (Satin Black)



**\$289<sup>00</sup>**

**3/4 size acoustic guitars**



**FROM \$95<sup>00</sup>**

**Warwick Corvette Standard 4-string bass**  
with bubinga body



**\$999<sup>00</sup>**

**Marshall MG-30DFX 30w 2 channel guitar amp**  
with digital effects



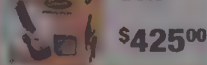
**\$285<sup>00</sup>**

**Boss ME-50 multi FX with expression pedal**



**\$395<sup>00</sup>**

**Fender Squier Bass Pak**  
includes:  
amp, bag,  
cable, strap  
& DVD



**\$425<sup>00</sup>**

## Keyboards



**Portable keyboards**

**FROM \$185<sup>00</sup>**

**Korg Microkorg virtual analog synth with vocoder**

**\$499<sup>00</sup>**



**Roland stage**



**\$149<sup>00</sup>**

**M-Audio USB**



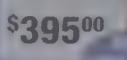
## Band

**Gil plastic Baroque recorders in translucent colours**



**\$675**

**Genial 4/4 violin outfit**



**\$395<sup>00</sup>**

**Maui Xaphoon \$85<sup>00</sup> pocket saxophone**



**Korg MA-30 metronome**



**\$195**

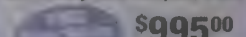
**Mighty Bright Sight Reader stand light**



**\$1495**

**Gemeinhardt flute**

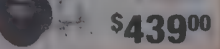
with sterling silver headjoint, B-foot



**\$995<sup>00</sup>**

## Drums

**CB 5-piece drumset with cymbals & throne**



**\$439<sup>00</sup>**

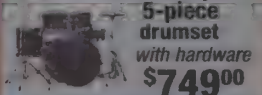


**Large djembes**  
handmade in Africa

**\$225<sup>00</sup>**

**Yamaha Rydeen**

**5-piece drumset with hardware**



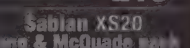
**\$749<sup>00</sup>**

**Sabian AA Long & McQuade Cast Performance Pack**  
inc. 18" hi-hats, 16" crash, 20" ride  
ride - w/ FREE 10" splash, hard case,  
t-shirt & key



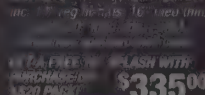
**\$490<sup>00</sup>**

**Sabian B8 Long & McQuade Performance Set**  
inc. hi-hats, 16" crash, 20" ride



**\$215<sup>00</sup>**

**Sabian XS20 Long & McQuade Pack**  
inc. 18" hi-hats, 16" crash, 20" ride  
ride - w/ FREE 10" splash, hard case,  
t-shirt & key



**\$335<sup>00</sup>**





# Wish List



## Pre Audio

0 digital



**Yamaha P60**  
digital piano

**\$1199<sup>00</sup>**



xygen 8  
controller

**\$175<sup>00</sup>**



**American DJ**  
**Fog Storm**  
**700**

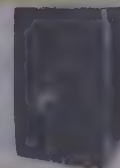
fog machine

**\$85<sup>00</sup>**



**Yorkville**  
**YSM1P**  
studio  
monitors

**\$640<sup>00</sup>**  
PAIR



**Numark Battle Pak 4**  
2 turntables, mixer  
& headphones



**\$599<sup>00</sup>**



**American**  
**Audio 0-01**  
DJ mixer

**\$125<sup>00</sup>**



**Studio Projects Bundle**

includes: 8-1 large  
diaphragm condenser  
microphone,  
VTB-1 mic. pre-amp,  
shockmount,  
messenger bag  
and cable

**\$299<sup>00</sup>**



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dec 11 & 12 rhonda withnell

dec 13 & 14 craig giacobbo

dec 18 mo lefever

dec 19 & 20 don berner



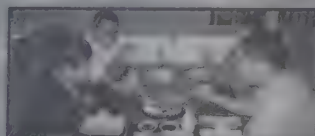
## GINSENG RESTAURANT

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Daily 5:00 pm 10:00 pm  
M-F 11:30 am - 2:00 pm  
Weekend Reservations Recommended

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# DISH WEEKLY

PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED RESTAURANTS

## LEGEND

Price per person, before tax and tip	
\$	— Less than \$10
\$\$	— \$10 to \$20
\$\$\$	— \$20 to \$30
\$\$\$\$	— \$30 and up

### BILLINGS GATE SEAFOOD MARKET AND LIGHTHOUSE CAFÉ

7331-104 St. • 433-0091

5506 Tudor Glen (St. Albert) • 460-2222

The smell of sea-dwelling lifeforms fills the air, and the East Coast music in the background makes me feel as though I've been suddenly transported to the Rock. I'm searching for the words to describe the dining area, a compact section featuring artistic depictions of fish and unsurprisingly, lighthouses. Then it hits me: "rustic oceanic atmosphere." (Okay, so that's what it says on the menu. So sue me.) Speaking of menus, I'm loving the Lighthouse's lunch edition. The level of sophistication is greater than I'd anticipated, what with the red Peruvian trout and Cajun prawn pizza. And the dinner menu is even more in-depth, featuring a list of stuff that makes my mouth water—paella, Hawaiian big-eye tuna, bouillabaisse and California striped bass with a mandarin fennel glaze. Very nice. And the wine list seems reasonably priced, too—I see a bottle of Australian Rosemount shiraz-cabernet is \$23 and I know the same bottle will run you about \$14 or so in the liquor store, so Billingsgate obviously isn't going crazy with the markup. Being the soup junkie that I am, I start off with a small bowl of lobster bisque. The lovely orange mixture is described as having been prepared in the traditional French style, with cognac, cream and rich lobster broth. Topped with some finely chopped fresh parsley, it's incredibly flavourful. Rich yes, but it doesn't weigh me down at all, which is good because I have a pickerel fillet on the way. (Note: you can get a bigger portion of the bisque as a meal. I saw one come out of the kitchen. Huge.) "That's a good choice," the server tells

me, as I order the fish, prepared in a tangerine butter and served with green apple relish. The large, colourful plate features the northern Alberta pickerel, a side of rice and a medley of vegetables. Not just your cheap, run-of-the-mill veggies, either, but a mix of red pepper, snow peas, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots and squash. The pickerel is good and tender, the white meat flaking apart as you gently prod it with the fork. I'm missing something, though. And unfortunately, it doesn't dawn on me until later that there was no green apple relish on the side. Damn. It would've tasted great with the pickerel... which is probably why it appears on the menu in the first place, right? Still, I douse the fish with some lemon and it's just fine. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 11/13/03)

### THE BLUE NILE ETHIOPIAN CUISINE 10875-98 St. • 428-5139

As I walk up to the front door of the Blue Nile, I feel like I'm entering someone's home. Colourful flowers line the walkway and the tiny patio out front is like the stoop of a house. Blue Nile's menu has just 10 items (none of them costing more than over \$10) so it's easy to make a decision and feel good about it. I consider the dorjo wat, a traditional Ethiopian chicken stew, and the rfito, very rare chopped beef with spiced butter, mitmita (a special red pepper sauce) and homemade cottage cheese, but the combo platter makes the most sense since it offers a wide assortment of dishes to explore. There's a beef dish (named either kaly wat or alicha wat, and I'm afraid I'm not sure which), shiro wat (a ground pea mash with onions, tomatoes and green peppers), tikel gomen (cabbage, potato and carrots simmered in a mild sauce with ginger, garlic, onion and green pepper), yeabesha gomen (steamed spinach) and a small portion of the Blue Nile house salad. We also ordered some ye bag wat, lamb braised in the common red pepper sauce. Everything is placed in a mesob, a large woven basket that partitions all the items into small servings. The bottom of the mesob

is lined with injera and the food is carefully placed atop it. Our server brings the lamb out in a separate bowl and spoons it into the centre of the basket, creating a layout that resembles an artist's palette just as colourful, too. The ye bag wat is especially tasty, with a fiery kick that doesn't overpower. We also really like the ground pea, which looks like a glob of yellow humus, and the steamed spinach, which reminds me of how my mother would cook greens like Swiss chard—it's bitter but very tender and nicely complemented by the pieces of injera. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 09/25/03)

### LEMONGRASS CAFÉ

10417-51 Ave • 413-0088

I was driving around aimlessly for a good hour, spotting nothing but "CLOSED" signs, before pulling up to the Lemongrass Café, a tasteful little Vietnamese place. Thankfully, it was open—the better half in the passenger seat gets awful grumpy when she's real hungry. We were seated in a deuce up against the camel coloured walls and dove right into the menus. I considered choosing something from the interesting drink menu, be it a green tea-laced martini or a Nhau vo sake Caesar but we didn't have the time. Need food—now. Kate and I figured we'd pick one main dish each, while I made the executive decision to start with some spicy kimchee and a special Southwestern Vietnamese noodle soup. Our capable waiter laid down the dishes—a plate of lemongrass chicken and a neat-looking vegetarian option, tofu with mango and apple in a spicy red curry. Oh, and some perfectly cooked fluffy rice. The crispy pieces of chicken were topped with a sweet, lemony glaze. Nothing fancy, but it sure hit the spot. And I really loved the vegetarian dish. The tofu still had some texture to it despite swimming in the lovely, rich curry. It included a few different types of apple chunks, though I didn't find much mango in it—just a little bite every now and then. I'm assuming the sweetness of the fruit was designed to counteract the fire of the curry and it all worked wonderfully together. (It was just fantastic spooned over the rice.) Our dessert, chocolate and pecan spring rolls, arrived atop a white, shell-shaped plate with three balls of lichee, a small dollop of whipped cream with a mint leaf and a tiny bowl of ginger coconut caramel glaze for dipping. This was a small masterpiece. I'd never seen a dessert like it and the taste was incredible—rich chocolate, melded with the pecans and paper-thin layers of the crispy spring roll, still hot. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 08/28/03)

### LEVA

11053-86 Ave • 433-LEVA

As soon as I walk into Leva, my eyes lock on the impressive-looking Sicilian cannolis behind the counter—I haven't seen old-school pastries like that in a long, long time. I instantly decide that after a relaxing, late afternoon bite, I'll be trying one. The main menu items are things like homemade thin-crust pizzas and tramezzinis, which are grilled sandwiches. But I notice some unique items too, like the biscottis—lemon pistachio or anise-flavoured. Very cool. There's also a nice array of imported beers and Italian wines, like the Nipozzano Chianti, a fantastic choice I've enjoyed on a few occas-

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Downtown  
10117-101 Street  
425-6151

on 1st

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drinks  
downtown

8pm til  
Midnight\*

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**Bomba Trio**

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and menu, log onto  
[www.zenaris.com](http://www.zenaris.com)



# Meat surrender

There's no resisting the high-cholesterol fare at Smokey Joe's

By DAVID DICENZO

If all goes as planned, I'm moving away from Alberta sometime next year. I'm obviously feeling some trepidation about that prospect, because lately I've had an incredible desire to soak up all things Albertan. The near future holds a trip to the mountains, a visit to a festival, a final PST-free shopping spree and, hopefully, one last Oiler playoff run (although if special teams stats mean anything, there's no sense holding my breath).

I've started taking mental snapshots of most of the places I go and my brain just shot another roll when I went to grab a bite at **Smokey Joe's Hickory Smokehouse**. Wait a sec—I have to back up. You don't go for "a bite" at Smokey Joe's. You go for a feed, and it really helps if you're iron-deficient because one trip to the 20-year-old Edmonton fixture will pack enough meat into you to last a while.

"You don't look 30 so I'll have to ask you for ID," our server says after I order a pint of Keith's.

What a sweet start to the meal. She's buttering me up.

I figure—er, I mean, I reckon—Smokey Joe's is meant to be a portrait of prairie existence, or at least an homage to it. License plates from all over the continent dot the walls and the menu, bound in wood, has headings like "Sandwiches" and

"Young Un's Dinners." The ranch theme is a little schmaltzy, but for a guy who'll soon be vacating the province with nothing but cold-hearted Easterners to look forward to, it's enough to bring small tear to my eye. The coolest thing has to be the pink butcher paper they use for tablecloths. That's a wicked touch.

My comedic dining buddy Steve is along for this trail ride and he busts a gut when he spots the veggie burger on the menu.

"I bet you it's never been ordered," he says.

Well, neither of us is gonna be the first, so instead we put all our eggs in one high-cholesterol basket: the sampler for two. It's got a little of everything and I take a brief moment

## RESTAURANTS

to acknowledge all the little critters that gave their lives for us on this night. The sampler includes, in no particular order, two roasted quarter chickens, pork ribs, turkey, ham, beef and two of Smokey Joe's famous ultra-hot wings. Oh, and garlic toast.

"We're out of wings tonight so I'll give you another quarter chicken. Is that okay?" our host inquires.

Deal!

You get your choice of three sides with the sampler, and Steve and I agree on cornbread, beans and potato salad. We don't notice much green anywhere in the restaurant so we see no sense in having any on our plate. Back a century ago, a cowboy wouldn't have been clamouring for a side salad, right? I swear there's a strained

uring there's no need to add mustard to the salmon. "Mayo and butter?" Neither. Mill Creek bakes everything fresh each day and as I attempt to wrap my mouth around the massive slices of grainy whole wheat bread with pieces of carrot in it, I think to myself that it looks awfully inviting. I had taken note of the fact that Kate

look on our server's face as she lugs out the gigantic oval plate with what Steve refers to as "a pile of meat" on it. "There—go wild," she says.

**ALL THE HOMEMADE** barbecue sauces are lined up in front of us—Smokey Joe's sells them on the premises, along a variety of meats, including jerky by the pound—and it's time to get to work. On this snowy, frigid night, the platter gives me a much-needed dose of summertime. The spicy taste of the smoked meats, the richness of the beans and the creamy potato salad are enough to make me forget that it got dark at 4:30 p.m. that day.

We're in a haze soon enough and in need of a break. We take one, but it's brief because the waitress (who also owns the place, having bought out the one and only Joe himself) insists we save room for dessert. Ha! She's a riot. In fact, we do have a tiny bit of steam left and Steve tries a good-looking chocolate rum cake while I'm thinking the Joe's shake should be a winner. Kahlua, milk and ice cream—what's not to like? I order it and the waitress gives me a funny look that indicates I'm the first customer to order the shake in the year that she's been around the business. I'm proud.

We square up and I sadly say goodbye to another Albertan landmark. I mosey on out, knowing for a fact that nothing back East will come close to resembling Smokey Joe's. ☐

### SMOKEY JOE'S HICKORY SMOKEHOUSE

15135 Stony Plain Road • 413-3379

asked for hot mustard and I patiently awaited her reaction. Sure enough, it came. "Whoa," she says after the first or second bite. It's actually really hot stuff—I try a nibble and some of the mustard actually burns a small nick on my lip. These sandwiches are huge and because baked goods are in our immediate

## DISH WEEKLY

sions. I go with the chicken pesto tramezzini and ask for a side of green bean salad. Antonio, the guy who seems to run the joint, tells me they're out, so I go for the potato salad. He says I'll like it. The tramezzini is incredible and I'll tell you why: I've had the chicken and pesto combo at other places and usually it's chicken loaf that comes with it. Not at Leva. Real, tender chicken breast, sliced thinly, combined with a tasty pesto and cheese. (I believe Antonio said it was Edam.) And the perfectly spherical scoop of potato salad is excellent—Antonio has left the skin on the potatoes, which I like, and he's mixed in a few artichokes too. He's also finished it all off with a drizzle of olive oil and some grated cheese on top.

**Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 10/02/03)

### MILL CREEK CAFÉ

9562-82 Ave • 439-5535

Other than a bevy of nice-looking sweets and baked goods, sandwiches are pretty much the order of the day at Mill Creek Café. Kate orders the Montreal smoked meat sandwich, while I eventually get around to choosing the salmon salad. Then come the questions. "Swiss, cheddar or cream cheese?" the counter girl asks. Kate says Swiss, I say cream. "Toma-to, cucumber and sprouts?" Yup. "Pickles?" Sure. "Hot, honey or Dijon mustard?" Kate says yes to the former and after a bit of deliberation, I pass, fig-

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## DISH WEEKLY

future, we pack up the remainders and head back to the counter. This time, I'm only slightly more decisive—a piece of chocolate cherry loaf (a mere buck and change) and a slice of lemon meringue pie, though the chocolate peanut butter bars were crying out at me. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 12/04/03)

### SCHÄNK'S ATHLETIC CLUB 9927-178 St • 444-2125

"The thing I love about Schänks," my friend Steve says, "is that other than the track, there's not a bigger cavalcade of problem gamblers anywhere." How prophetic. Just as we sit down in front of one of the many massive TV screens with the game on (they have the sound up for the NFL tilt as opposed to the CFL playoff game, which in a way is too bad), I can't help but notice the freakshow going on one table over. The guy in question is wearing a leather tricoloured Miami Dolphins hat, his dirty jeans are wide open and his ample gut is hanging out, and in between nervously sipping coffee, hauling on cigarettes and choosing plays on his Q81 machine, he appears to be rubbing himself down, head included, with a bottle of Absorbine Jr. But I'm more chuffed about the meager order of hot, boneless wings that we start out with. Nine bucks and there's nothing more than a handful of overdone, deep-fried chicken chunks with some hot sauce and a side of ranch. Luckily, one my superstars has already scored a touchdown so I'm in a good mood, just like the hardcore Canadian fans celebrating Saskatchewan's route of Winnipeg. The

quality slightly improves with the next round of eats. I go with the peppercorn jack burger, while Steve tries the spolumbo submarine sandwich. I haven't had a burger in a while, so it's a treat to sink into the big patty, which was seasoned with—get this—"course" pepper and a Jack Daniels barbecue sauce. I wonder for a second if the typo was on purpose. Nah. My mixed greens on the side have about as much spring as the Blue Bombers offence, but the crispy order of kettle chips makes up for it. The home-made chips are nice and hot, served with a bowl of a real spicy onion, cream cheese dip. It's definitely the "play of the day" in this highlight package. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 11/06/03)

### TERRY VAUGHN'S SPORTS LOUNGE 10136-100 St (The MacLeod) • 428-3399

If you know anything about stalwart Eskimo wide receiver Terry Vaughn, then you know he's a class act who always looks good on the football field. It's no surprise, then, that the establishment that bears his name should have the same characteristics. The space is big (okay, that's where the similarity to TV ends) and bold, with stained wood chairs/accents, a beautiful long bar, comfy leather couches and a super-high ceiling left over from the bank that was housed in the space some 20 years ago. I'm starving when we walk through the door and in time, a healthy serving (in quantity, not cholesterol) of hickory smoked chicken dip is placed in front of us. The rich portion of dip—a tasty combo of jack cheese and tender chunks of chicken topped with melted cheddar—is pretty large. Served with fresh tricoloured corn chips and salsa, it's a great starter. I know it will fill us up but I

can't stop dunking the chips until every last bit of the concoction is scraped from the sides of the bowl.

We split a house salad, a standard mix of greens and veggies, but the tangy mango vinaigrette we chose sets it apart from similar items on most menus. Even though the dip has bird in it, the slow-roasted jerk chicken with rice and beans jumps off the page at me. One problem: no beans in the rice. Oh well. The chicken is incredibly tender and man, the jerk coating hits me harder than Terry's teammate Singor Mobley in the open field. This was serious heat. I really like the dish, but for a few shaky moments, I feel like I'm in a sauna. Our server, a friendly lass from Nova Scotia, recommends the cheesecake for dessert and we like the sound of a strawberry and chocolate combo for topping. Really good stuff and nicely presented, with a few fresh mint leaves on the side. We're filled up big time by this point and ready to get outta Dodge. The tab comes and I'm fairly impressed that we've only racked up a bill of about \$60, despite what seemed like a substantial amount of food and drink. **Average price: \$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 08/14/03)

### TROPIKA MALAYSIAN CUISINE 6004-104 St • 439-6699

As we meet up in the front entrance of Tropika and I'm amazed by how packed it is this jumping Friday night. I've been here before and I loved it—but that visit was quite some time ago. Years, in fact, and it seems Tropika's gotten a lot more popular since then. And why not? With the straw awning over the bar, the big woven chairs reserved for VIPs and the Hawaiian shirts on the waitstaff, it's like

island party central in here. Before we even look at the tantalizing food menu, we giggle at the depth and variety of the drink list. Doctor Funk (and Doctor Funk's Sun, made with 151 rum), Bellini, Scorpion—they all look good. Birthday boy John finds his groove when he orders a Tropikolada, a drink that apparently comes from heaven. "You couldn't come up with anything that would make me happier," John says after slurping up the last bit of what one table member calls "an Orange Julius with alcohol." I figure food will make us even happier. Right out of the gate, we try some starters: a dozen satays (pork, beef, chicken and lamb), five Indonesian spring rolls and two bowls of Singapore Laska, a hearty soup with vermicelli noodles. The crunchy peanut sauce goes well with the satays and the spring rolls are incredibly neat, stuffed with pan-fried pork, Chinese mushrooms and shredded jicama, then deep-fried extra-crispy with peanuts on the outer shell. The Singapore Laska is a feast with shrimp, tofu and fish cakes all married together in a tasty broth. My favourite, however, is the Kari Lembu, a sensational dish of melt-in-your-mouth curry with beef. We also ordered something known as Nasi Goreng, a local recipe of Malay fried rice and a few delectable side dishes, including steamed spinach and Sambal Bunchies, firm green beans with prawns and Sambal sauce. While each of these creations rocks (very spicy stuff), the most memorable item is the Sayur Lemak hot pot, which comes to the table in a small kettle filled with vegetables and prawns simmered in a Malay coconut sauce. Oh, it was awesome, the broth so rich and colourful—by far the pièce de résistance. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 10/09/03)

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# MUSIC • this week

## thursday

It's a night of down-home roots music at the Sidetrack Café. **John Henry** is the latest local sensation, riding high on the release of their new disc, *Charmin' Billy*. Former farmer John Gorham leads a ragtag group of seasoned veterans through some of the finest roots music around, while the Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir are coming around to set around the fire for a spell. Cover is a mere \$7.

## friday

It's Christmastime, if you haven't noticed, which means Edmonton will soon be overrun with choirs singing all manner of Yuletide tunes. Thank goodness for A Jazzy Nutcracker Suite, a twist on an old favourite. Locally bred and world-renowned saxophonist **P.J. Perry** leads a merry band that includes lauded New York pianist Bill Mays through this night of spirited Yuletide interpretations. Tickets start at \$18.50, available at the Winspear Box Office.

## saturday

You could go two ways tonight. Your rootsier side might want to stake out the Power Plant, because ex-Walton Jason Plumb is back in town, hanging with Paul Brill and our own local angel Jen Kraatz. Your punk side, however, may want to head downtown to Seedy's and see Montreal's latest ska export, **The Delegates**, who have a lovely Operation Ivy-meets-Mighty Mighty Bosstones vibe, as featured on their new indie disc, *We All Taste the Same*. So make up your mind already.

## sunday

We did mention that it's Christmastime in the city, right? Yeah. Escape to Festival Place in Sherwood Park and enjoy A Celtic Christmas, as presented by the much-loved bunch in the **McDades**. Tickets are \$21 (theatre) and \$23 (cabaret), available at Ticketmaster. Or you could stay in town and enjoy Pro Coro Canada at the Winspear Centre, who will sing a program of seasonal classics for the whole family. Tickets range from \$23.50 to \$33.50, and are available at the Winspear Box Office.

## monday

It's an ideal time to go Christmas shopping or check out one of the many open stages around town. Or you could turn on MuchMusic and enjoy part one of **The New Music 25th Anniversary Special**. The program's influence on music journalism was immense as it explored pop and social culture with a rare combination of immediacy and high journalistic standards. Former host J.D. Roberts is now a White House correspondent, while Denise Donlon runs Sony Music Canada. Quite the legacy. That's on MM at 7:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.

## tuesday

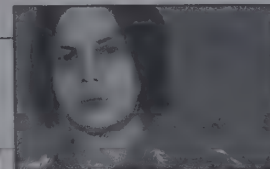
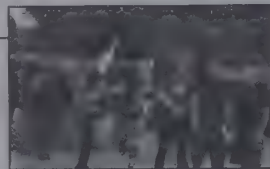
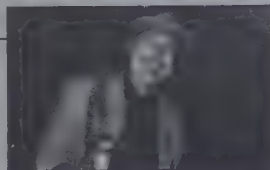
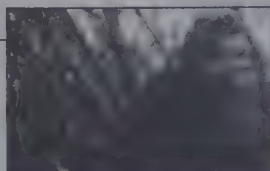
New releases this week: Goodie Mob's *Dirty South Classics* (Arista), Memphis Bleek's *Made* (Def Jam), Akon's *Trouble* (Universal), Joe's *And Then* (Jive) and Santana's *Ceremony: Remixes and Rarities* (Arista). But the big one is the original soundtrack to *Cold Mountain*, the big-budget period romance flick with Jude Law and Renée Zellweger. That ol' boyfriend of hers, **Jack White**, is in there too, with some new songs he wrote for the film.

## wednesday

After 12 years spent turning themselves into one of Canada's beloved bands, **The Watchmen** are on the road one last time before calling it quits. The Winnipeggers will play at Red's one last time, with a special setlist of fan requests. Not only that, the entire show will be available for download from their website soon after it's over. Read our feature on page 52. Former Mike Plume boys the Populars warm things up. Tickets at Red's and Ticketmaster.

## newswire

Warner Music Canada has announced their new president in 2004 will be **Steve Kane**, who has been instrumental in attracting hit artists like Billy Talent and Buck 65 to the label.... It's wedding time—**Diana Krall** tied the knot with **Elvis Costello** last Friday, while actress **Gwyneth Paltrow** is rumoured to have married Coldplay singer **Chris Martin** in a private ceremony in Los Angeles last week.... Fallen R&B star **Bobby Brown** is looking at a convictable assault charge after allegedly striking wife **Whitney Houston**.... The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) have nominated Canucks **Rufus Wainwright** and **Peaches** for their annual media awards in the Outstanding Music Artist category.... American civil rights advocate **Rosa Parks** has won the right to sue rap group OutKast for their 1998 song "Rosa Parks".... Criminal charges have been laid against in connection to the **Great White concert fire** that took place nine months ago in Rhode Island, which means the band's tour manager and the owners of the Station nightclub could each face up to 30 years in prison.



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## MUSIC



## music notes

By JERED STUFFCO

### Preaching to the Choir

**The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir • With Joe Henry • Sidetrack Café • Thu, Dec 11** The website for Calgary's Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir claims that the band "formed during the strange winter of 2000, a gathering of refugees and reprobates from the Calgary folk and punk music scenes." Sounds like a recipe for disaster, but according to Choir-man Vladimir Sobolewski, the merger pro-

ceeded very harmoniously.

"Judd and myself used to be in a band called Great Uncle Bull," he says, "and Bob and myself used to be in another band called the Puritans. Both bands were dissolving at around the same time and I knew Bob was free and I was already playing with Judd, so we brought Bob in and the rest is history."

Sobolewski, who describes the band's sound as "gutbucket, bluegrass, bootstompin' and tree-kickin'," says the new project picks up where the psychobilly antics of the Puritans left off... sort of. "The Puritans were all electric and loud," he says, "and we're still loud, mind you. I think the intensity is definitely there, as well as trying to stay true to the music and to what we wanted to do with the music."

It's an approach that seems to be paying off. The band has won accolades for their debut CD, *Saint Hubert*, and landed summer gigs at festivals like South Country Fair, Wayne Fest and the Calgary Folk Fest. Sobolewski says that

despite the fact that winter has just begun, he and his pals are already starting to map out their plans for 2004 which include a slew of festival appearances and perhaps a new full-length to boot. "I'm bugging the guys to get back into the studio right now," Sobolewski says optimistically, "because we have a killer CD's worth of new music that I'm dying to put out."

### Swingers' club

**Gate • With Texas Blood Money and Hilo • New City • Fri, Dec 12** It seems like the story has been told a thousand times: local band forms, local band plays gigs and attracts a sizable fanbase, local band enters the studio and puts out a warmly received CD—and just when things are starting to pick up, local band loses its original lineup and splinters into oblivion. Sound familiar? It does to me, but I've been writing these Music Notes items for a long time now.

Anyway, if the local band you're

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talking about is Gate, that template doesn't apply; in their case, losing a key member only strengthened their resolve and made them work harder. When Gate lost their original guitarist, Alan Harding, last February, the band's three remaining members soldiered on without him. "What we did was when Alan left, we replaced him with another guitarist and added a second one to achieve more of the melodic element that we were going for," explains Gate bassist Jarred Muir. "After he left, we re-evaluated what we wanted to do, and we decided that a second guitarist would be an asset in what we were trying to achieve. It was pretty hard at first because we were such a close band, but after we added the other two guys, things moved pretty quickly. Now we've got a fifth instrument and a fifth mind. We've fallen into a new mould and it's starting to gel. Now it seems everybody is contributing pieces and arranging ideas."

With the lineup change complete last spring, Gate started pounding the pavement with renewed vigour. Since then, the quintet has logged several local shows as well as performances in Calgary and Saskatchewan. However, it's not like Gate has pulled a U2 and made any drastic alterations to their sound. Far from it—Muir insists the band's new material continues in the similar, darkly introspective vein that made their CD *Lost* a local fave last year: "I think we've honed our songwriting and we've tightened up what we've done before," he says, "but we've maintained the progressive kinds of arrangements and the longer, more moody, atmospheric stuff as well."

Friday's gig is also a benefit for the Food Bank, so bring down lots of non-perishable food items. In other words, bring a can of soup and leave that head of lettuce at home.

#### Imperial Blueroom

**Blueroom • With Uncle Outrage • Ruckus (10351-82 Ave) • Sun, Dec 14** As I watched Sheryl Crow strut her stuff on a MuchMoreMusic concert special the other night, I made a not-so-stunning observation: why is it that female frontwomen always seem to require a male backup band?

Well, as if to buck the trend, local newcomers Blueroom—where the instruments are provided by Jessica Faulds, Katherine Hiltz and Emily



The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir

Henkemans—are three girls backing up a male singer. How did this happen? "Jessica, Katherine and I have been friends for a long time," Henkemans explains, sounding a little stressed-out due to a busy exam schedule. "We realized that Jessica played drums, Katherine played guitar and I played bass, so we decided to start playing together." After jamming as a three-piece, the trio soon realized that a singer would be an ideal complement to their sprawling, experimental instrumental pieces. Enter vocalist/guitarist Nano Uribe. "I met Nano on [Indie.net], actually," Henkemans laughs.

Not to dwell unduly on gender issues, but maybe Blueroom's unusual gender reversal has to do with the fact that, unlike Sheryl Crow, the band is decidedly un-commercial. Indeed, while Clive Davis may see the merit of parading a beautiful-albeit-less-than-stellar vocalist in front of a fantastic backing band, the post-rock world tends to put less emphasis on sex appeal and more on actual talent. Henkemans says the creative process also lends itself well to the band's egalitarian set-up. "I guess [the music] sort of comes out however it comes out," she says. "Usually someone comes in with a part or someone will play something and we'll jam on it for a little while and eventually, we'll come out with something solid."

With bands such as Sigur Rós, Radiohead and Godspeed! You Black Emperor as touchstones, one thing is

certain: don't expect Blueroom to break into "All I Wanna Do" or "Leaving Las Vegas" anytime soon.

#### System of a town

**Mike Park and the AA Sound System • With Paul Bellows and the Dead Canadas • Sidetrack Café • Tue, Dec 16** Since debuting earlier this year, local music fans have had a hard time describing just what exactly the AA Sound System is up to—musically, that is. In fact, I recently asked a friend to describe the band for me. "They're, like, this weird, psychedelic, folk, acoustic thing" is how he responded.

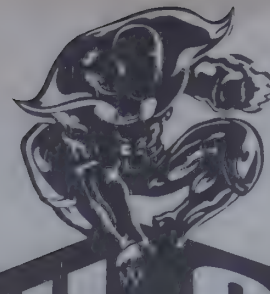
"That's pretty close," agrees the band's drummer, Marek Tyler. "We all love folk music, and I think [singer Ayla Brook] writes everything on the acoustic guitar. We all come from Saskatchewan—Ayla and I grew up together—and we grew up on our parent's record collections."

However, countering his bandmates' love of roots and acoustic music is bassist Lane Arndt, a man steeped in experimentalism and obscure electronic music. "Lane does a lot of arrangements in the avant-garde, new music laptop vein," Tyler exclaims. "It's great and very glitchy—if you were to listen to *Brave New Waves*, that's Lane's type of stuff."

Last July, the trio spent some time in their native Saskatchewan laying down bed tracks for a debut album. "It was really neat," Tyler says. "The three of us went and spent four days out in Saskatchewan at Ayla's farm and in this old wood house. We just set up open mics like an old jazz album and basically just laid down the bed tracks and just relaxed. We spent a lot of time recording more and more music. If we wanted to, we could go for a walk in the field or make some food and play music all night."

In keeping with their unorthodox approach, Tuesday's gig at the Track will feature AA Sound System backing up local singer/songwriter Mike Park, showcasing a slightly different sound from the usual AA experience. "Me, Ayla and Lane all live on the same floor of the same apartment building," Tyler says, "and Mike is Ayla's roommate, so it was a natural choice for us to back him up."

Just don't ask him to describe what it'll sound like. •



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## THU LIVE MUSIC

**ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** Tim and John

**BLUES ON WHYTE** Shelly Jones and RbS (R&B); no cover

**CASINO (YELLOWHEAD)** Bad Habitz (pop/rock)

**DUSTER'S PUB** Every Thu: Jam

**FOUR THOMAS (DOWNTOWN)** Rhoda Withnell

**HUDSONS TAP HOUSE** Neil MacDonald

**KINGSNIGHT PUB** (Lakeside) O'BYRNE'S Gordon Belsher (Celtic), Cynthia MacLeod (fiddle); 9:30pm; no cover

**RYTHM AND BREWS** Every Thu: Open stage/Jam with the River City Rhythm Kings; 8:30-midnight

**SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO)** Jimmy Whiffen

**SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN)** Tim Becker

**SHERLOCK HOLMES (WEM)** Dave Hiebert

**SIDETRACK CAFE** John Henry; The Agnostic Mountain Gospel Choir; 9pm; \$7

**URBAN LOUNGE** Ongrace the Retroman; no cover

**ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL** The Acousticholics

**BLUES ON WHYTE** Shelly Jones and RbS (R&B); \$3

**CAPITOL HILL PUB** Johnny Boar Bon

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**DUSTERS PUB** Loose Cannon

**FATBOY'S** The Acousticals (blues, roots); 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover

**HAIRY KNUCKLE CLUB** The Hair

**FOUR THOMAS (DOWNTOWN)** Rhoda Withnell

**HIGHRUM** King Muskafa

**HUDSONS TAP HOUSE** Neil MacDonald

**J.J.'S Cause and Affect** (rock)

**KINGSNIGHT PUB** Monkey's Uncle

**LEGIONS PUB** (Lakeside) Kings (rock); no cover

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**LA PTITE SCENE** Every Fri: open stage; 8pm-3am

**RATTLESNAKE SALOON** Melanie Laine

**RED'S** Sinclair, Cooking Up Science; free (before 8pm)/\$4 (after 8pm)

**SECOND CUP** Turtle Crossing (original roots/pop); 8-11pm

**SEEDY'S** Darrel Anderson and the Guaranteed, George Bushes, Robyn Weatherall

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**SECOND CUP</**













By JENNY FENIAK

## Guaranteed satisfaction

**Darrek Anderson and the Guaranteed • CD Release with Robyn Weatherall • Seedy's • Fri, Dec 12**

It's hard to say whether Ontario native Darrek Anderson consciously adopted Edmonton as his home or if our city simply sucked him into its bottomless well of fabulous musicians on its own. Either way, Anderson landed in town just over five years ago and has no plans to go anywhere soon, aside from the occasional tour with his newly-established band, the Guaranteed.

"They're good friends of mine and they were what I thought would be a suitable choice," says Anderson of the group—Gavin Dunn, Scott Davidchuk and Rod West. "But I thought they would be a little too busy and I didn't think they would get into things as well as they did. What I actually thought I would do is, like with this demo, I thought I'd record [and] I'd use that to get a band if I wanted to keep playing. But these guys are totally into it and I

should've seen it coming. Things turned out quite a bit better than I had been shooting for and the band's developed quite a bit since then."

One of Anderson's biggest assets as a performer is his songwriting, a skill he's been honing since his youth. After years of stockpiling songs and stories, Anderson felt it was finally time to lay them down, so he sought out the expertise of Scott Franchuk at Riverdale Records. Almost immediately, the project morphed from a practical collection of a few songs to *The Old Routine*, Anderson's debut album, and people should be thankful to have all eight outstanding tracks available for their listening pleasure. Each song erupts from a totally personal and unique corner of Anderson's world—and he doesn't skimp on the details.

"It's funny," he says, "because I had a hard time for years writing lyrics, because I would always try to hide the experiences and make it not so that it was about me. I guess my problem ini-

tially was I wasn't confident enough to share all these personal things. And maybe now that I'm older, it's like we've all been through a lot of the things and it's really no big deal and there's no sense in covering it up."

Anderson proudly proclaims that Edmonton songwriters and roots musicians are in a league of their own, and he thinks he's picked the cream of the crop. Although he has several theories to explain Edmonton's rich musical scene, the one he relayed to Franchuk, an avid hockey fan, blames it all on the NHL. "All the guys around here grew up watching the Edmonton Oilers play hockey and be a total success and win Stanley Cups," he says. "And I grew up watching the Toronto Maple Leafs, who just sucked. I think that there's a lot of value in that kind of thing. The kids growing up and watching that—it builds a lot of confidence in them and their city and they think they can go out and succeed and do things and be the best." ●

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# TOP 200 Megatunes

Your Music Destination

FOR THE WEEK ENDING DEC 11, 2003

1. Joe Strummer & The Mescaleros – Streetcore (hellcat)
2. The Dixie Hummingbirds – Diamond Jubilation (founder)
3. Blink 182 – Blink 182 (geffen)
4. Just Because I'm A Woman – Songs Of Dolly Parton (sugar hill)
5. Sarah McLachlan – Afterglow (netwerk)
6. The Floor – Autonomy Off/On (the floor)
7. Emmylou Harris – Stumble Into Grace (nonesuch)
8. Beautiful – A Tribute To Gordon Lightfoot (northern blues)
9. The Shins – Chutes Too Narrow (sub pop)
10. Outkast – Speakerbox/The Love Below (arista)
11. Jim Guthrie – Now, More Than Ever (threegut)
12. Blackie & The Rodeo Kings – Bark (true north)
13. Hatebreed – The Rise Of Brutality (universal)
14. Johnny Cash – The Man Comes Around (american)
15. Against Me! – As The Eternal Cowboy (fat)
16. Van Morrison – Whats Wrong With This Picture? (blue note)
17. Guided By Voices – Human Amusements At Hourly Rates (matador)
18. Most Precious Blood – Our Lady Of Annihilation (trustkill)
19. Paul Westerberg – Come Feel Me Tremble (vagrant)
20. Coheed & Cambria – In Keeping Secrets Of Silent Earth:3 (equal vision)
21. The Distillers – Coral Fang (hellcat)
22. Harry Manx & Kevin Breit – Jubilee (northern blues)
23. DM & Jemini – Ghetto Pop Life (lex)
24. Rufus Wainwright – Want One (dreamworks)
25. Edie Brickell – Volcano (universal)
26. Steve Winwood – About Time (sci fidelity)
27. Iron & Wine – The Sea & The Rhythm (sub pop)
28. Hawksley Workman – Lover/Fighter (universal)
29. Anti-Flag – The Terror State (fat)
30. Petra Haden & Bill Frisell – S/T (true north)

## DAMIEN RICE - O

Magnificently packaged in a CD-sized hardcover book filled with personal artwork, lyrics, and photos, Damien Rice's debut full-length, *O*, is nothing less than a work of genius, a perfect cross between Ryan Adams and David Gray and a true contender for one of the best albums of 2003.

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## MUSIC

# De La Soul asylum

Legendary hip hop group is still looking for a label to call home

By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

It's been a while since *Vue Weekly* spoke to Posdnuos—almost a year and a half, in fact. Last time we talked, the third and final installment of De La Soul's *Art Official Intelligence (AOI)* series was in the works—an album dedicated primarily to DJs. The group's label of 12 years, Tommy Boy Records, had just shifted its focus to dance music, forcing De La to look elsewhere for a distributor. Elektra Records appeared to be their most promising option.

My, how things have changed.

Yes, the group's DJ is still on track. Yes, the group's DJ and most unsung member, Maseo, will still be spearheading the majority of the album. And yes, the group is still label-less. But another, more traditional De La album is also in the works. Posdnuos, one of the group's two lead MCs, says the decision to work on two albums at once was prompted by their current

label status and fans' perception of the group. "At one point in the recording process, we had a dilemma," Pos admits. "We were starting to realize that certain people wanted to hear an album that did consist of Dave [a.k.a. Trugoy, the group's third member] and I doing a lot of rhyming, as opposed to an album that may just have Mase rhyming and some instrumentals. Whichever album finishes first is what we're going to put out, and the De La

## PREVIEW HIP-HOP

album is almost there."

Though the *AOI* album seems to be taking an extremely long time to complete, Pos says it was a group decision to not rush the project or cheat their diehard fans of an album with so much potential. In true De La fashion, he says both albums will feature skits, insightful messages and tons of surprises—including a reunion with the group's former producer, Prince Paul.

Though De La is still looking for a label to distribute their work, Posdnuos says that after negotiations with Elektra and Warner broke down, talks with labels like Jive and Capitol Records started looking promising.

Unlike their previous deal with Tommy Boy, in which De La was a small fish in a big pond of popular acts, the guys want more of a partnership out of their next label deal.

**STILL, HIP-HOP IS** a young-man's game. Record labels aren't going to put their maximum efforts into signing rappers who've been around since the late '80s when teen superstars like Nick Cannon (also signed to Jive) or artists like Chingy (on Capitol) are establishing themselves as heavy-hitters, right? Wrong.

"What we've been playing off of is our legacy," Pos says. "Not only that, but we're showing them that we still can compete. Honestly whether it's Alicia Keys or Chaka Khan, if you show them that you can make them money, they're going to be behind you 100 per cent. R. Kelly is my age, Dr. Dre is my age and Jay-Z is my age, and these people are competing." And with the latest album from Ice Cube's Westside Connection group project creating a decent buzz in retail and Snoop Dogg's career only gaining momentum, Pos may be on the right track.

Throughout the years, De La Soul has seen many fads come and go

## Vivid imagination

The "Disney of porn" branches out into club life with the Porn Star Ball

By DAVE JOHNSTON

It's probably a fantasy of any red-blooded, heterosexual male to go out one night to a club and hook up with a beautiful bombshell of a woman, just like the one you saw in that porn video. Once, by accident, of course, at a party—and you weren't really watching. Then your girlfriend came in and started yelling at you for watching it and... well, you get the picture.

Now imagine going to a club and watching your girlfriend try to cajole a real-life porn star into a make-out session. The porn star you watched in that movie. The porn star who made you shrink into a shy little boy when you asked her for an autograph.

Don't worry, things like that have happened at a Vivid Porn Star Ball, according to Vivid vice-president David Schlessinger. "I've seen some pretty funny things happen," he laughs.

The Vivid Porn Star Ball, around for the past couple of years, was the

brainchild of Nikita Events, a division of San Francisco's Spundae Worldwide, a company that made its name in the United States during the 1990s with DJ-oriented events. "The Porn Star Ball was created to give people the idea of something that was going to be sexy," Schlessinger explains. "The natural

## PREVIEW CLUBBING

progression was to have the Vivid name attached to it."

Vivid's reputation in the entertainment industry has helped remove the stigma attached to adult film, Schlessinger says. Their methods, based on the old studio star system, empower Vivid actresses to call their own shots in everything they do. Women, he concludes, are the "kings of the castle" in their operation. "When I reach out to a press entity or a potential [business] partner, I rarely see a

wry reaction from them anymore," he says. "People know who we are. We're often called 'the Disney of porno,' because we have recognizable faces and characters. The odd time you might find a feminist reporter or a Bible-beater who thinks that what we're doing is just terrible. But if they really looked into how Vivid treats their business, they might find themselves to be sorely mistaken."

**BUILDING A NIGHT** around the presence of Vivid stars like Savanna Samson and Sunrise Adams and adult-themed activities like sexy costume contests speaks to the fantasy element of clubbing, adds Schlessinger. "People can come out to these things and find out that these girls are real people," he says. "Seeing them dance, not onstage with a pole taking 10-dollar tips but dancing out







from the dashiki and Africa medallion era to the rise of gangsta rap and today's completely commercialized brand of hip-hop. It's been ages since De La's breakthrough debut album *3 Feet High and Rising*, but Pos says the group hasn't found it too hard to adapt to new styles of music—their

collaboration with Sean Paul on "Shoomp" earlier this year proves that. Still, it's usually the corporations and not the artists who decide what's hot and what's not. "It's more on what the labels think people wanted to hear," Pos says. "Even Tommy Boy wanted their 'gangsta rapper,' and the

closest they had to that was Naughty by Nature. Even when we came out, Jive wanted a De La Soul, so they signed Tribe. It's just the nature of businesses trying to do business."

One aspect of hip-hop that Pos says has lost its impact is the posse song, a track on which rappers join

together to deliver a common message. The members of De La Soul are veterans of this type of track, with appearances on songs like "Doin' Our Own Dang," "Let the Horns Blow" and "Buddy" under their belts. As well, De La was an essential contributor to the Afro-centric Native Tongues collective (originally comprised of A Tribe Called Quest, Jungle Brothers, Queen Latifah and Monie Love), and was in the studio when Tribe and Leaders of the New School (Busta Rhymes's former group) recorded "Scenario." But Pos says that nowadays collaborations are the result of convenience more than anything else, with artists simply placing "generic verse A" next to "generic verse B" and calling it a posse cut.

"It's almost textbook to have a crew now," he says. "Unfortunately, I don't even feel that it's a real thing anymore, and people think they've got to do it just to be down. Now it's just a part of the norm—it's nothing impressive. For anyone to go on a talk show and say they've got Cash Money on their album, it doesn't matter anymore. It means a lot to us that, even if it's a hot MC, that hot MC has to work hard for the track at hand. That doesn't happen too much anymore... I just remember I was so shocked that Run DMC did a song with Kurtis Blow

called '8 Million Stories' for Kurtis Blow's album. Even though you knew they had an affiliation with each other, it was still just amazing."

**DE LA SOUL HAS USED** collaborations to give a boost to the careers of many other artists, including Common ("The Bizness," from *Stakes Is High*) and Mos Def ("Big Brother Beat," also from *Stakes Is High*). Pos cites B-Real's (Cypress Hill) appearance on AOL Bionix as a perfect example of what can happen when a collaboration is done right. Though B-Real was by no means a "hot" artist when the song was released, his dedication to the project made the track, "Peer Pressure," more than memorable.

The posse cut may be a lost art these days, but Pos is willing to adapt if that's what it takes to get his message out. "We don't have unrealistic goals of thinking we've got to find somebody to support what we're doing who's all into this art," he says. "That's our job, and we know that it's a business for the businessman. We understand that game and know how to be a part of it all too well." ●

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## classical notes

By ALLISON KYDD

### Yule Intentions

If it weren't so cold outside, I'd be tempted to pitch a tent at the Winspear Centre this time of year; Edmonton's "premier concert hall" is that busy. And if I only shopped at that one box office, my life would have no time conflicts. But who said life was simple? Almost every other concert venue is equally packed, with Convocation Hall being the one exception. (Apparently it closes over exam time and the Christmas break.)

Still, I have to admit the two concerts I've marked as "can't-miss" events on my calendar this week are both at the Winspear. First, on Sunday at 2 p.m., Pro Coro Canada presents its annual *Family Christmas* concert. This is a sampler of gorgeous music both old and new—last year's audience even got a taste of singing under the baton of Richard Sparks. Even those familiar old carols we'd sung hundreds of times before came to life. This year they'll be accompanied by organ (Jeremy Spurgeon, of course) and brass quintet (trumpeters Alvin Lowrey and Joel Gray, horn player Mary Fearon, trombonist Ryan Purchase and bass trombonist Ken Read).

On Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., *Voices, Bells and Brass*—a performance by the Greenwood Singers, the University of Alberta Department of Education Handbell Ringers and the Mill Creek Colliery Band—also returns to the Winspear. The singers and the ringers should both be in good voice, as they were performing on that very stage most of last weekend as part of the Yuletide Fantasy, as well as the Kids' Candy Cane Concert, which must have been successful as the balconies were full and two little golden boys said they had a good time. (Of course, that might have been because of the well-timed appearance of Santa—a.k.a. Bill Dimmer—or the popcorn. And there was that moment when the usher had to peel the three-year-old off the wall. As usual, everything's relative.)

As for the brass, the Mill Creek Colliery Band recently lured a good-

sized audience to McDougall Church with a musical trip called *World Travelers* on a late-November Sunday afternoon. The fact that the popular time slot was shared by concerts at Holy Trinity Church and Convocation Hall, not to mention an open house at the new CBC headquarters, makes the healthy attendance something of a coup. Of course this is not just any brass band but a *colliery* band, an English working-class phenomenon that's slowly gaining a foothold in Canada. It was a vigorous concert, especially once the band got warmed up. For instance, a virtuosic work by Scottish composer Peter Graham called *Windows of the World* depicted a number of exotic cultures and came home for a "Celtic Dream."

The range of traditional brass instruments in the band was a revelation, from various sizes of euphoniums, tubas, trombones and cornets to a lone flugel (in the hands of an excellent player). The many solo segments included a substantial effort by trombonist Kathryn Macintosh in Eric Cook's "Bolivar." It's a mystery whether imported conductor Derek Broadbent's broad jokes and general tomfoolery are part of the colliery tradition. If not, I'd suggest gagging.

But, hold it a minute, I can't go on in this manner about just two concerts and ignore the 20 other groups that have been pouring their hearts, hands and voices into their own productions. There's opera—*ELOPE* and *Alberta Opera* (with *A Wonderful Life* and *Jack in the Beanstalk* still running until Saturday and Sunday at the Kaasa and the Varscona theatres respectively). There are choirs—namely the 200-strong Cantillon Choirs directed by Heather Johnson, Barbara Johnson and Mona Huedepohl, candlelight procession and all, at 3 p.m.; and the Arioso Women's Choir directed by Marilyn Kerley and accompanied by Helen Stuart, which specializes in repertoire written especially for women's voice, at 7 p.m. Both recitals are at McDougall Church on Sunday, December 14. On December 15, the Edmonton Columbian Choirs, presents *A Celebration of Christmas* at 7 p.m. at the Winspear Centre. Elaine Dunbar, Colin Armstrong, Meredith McEwen, David Sawatsky and Heather Bedford Clooney direct the various groupings within this mixed adult and children's program.

And so it goes. I know I'm not alone in having to choose from among a cornucopia of possibilities, and no doubt there are still productions I have overlooked. All in all, it gives me a great excuse not to go shopping. ●

### Porn Star Ball

Continued from page 44

on the floor, brings a neat reality to people who never thought that they'd get that close to someone like that."

Nightclubs by nature are sexy places, Schlessinger says, especially with dance music's propensity for hedonism and escapist themes. "People meet there, they hook up, they go home together, whatever," he chuckles. "These are the sorts of things adult

movies portray—at least the Vivid movies do. They're movies with a beginning, a middle and an end that happen to have sex scenes drawn all the way out, rather than start them and cut to the following morning."

The crowd who turn up at Porn Star Balls are much more mixed than you would expect, Schlessinger continues. "You'd think that if you threw a Vivid party, you'd get 90 [per cent] guys and 10 [per cent] girls, which is reasonable because you'd think that girls might feel intimidated being at a

porn party. These events have changed that idea—the crowd is very mixed."

Just don't think that once you've met a woman like Sunrise, you can take her home. There's a fine line between fantasy and reality, after all. "If you slapped one of them on the ass, you'd [also] meet five guys bigger than anyone you've ever met in your life," Schlessinger laughs. ●

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BY DAVID STONE

## Bad reputation

**Bad Boy Bill • With Steve Smooth**  
**• The Joint • Thu, Dec 11** Bad Boy Bill honestly doesn't know if there's anyone out there cutting up house music in a hip-hop style the way he does. "That's the problem with my job," the Chicago native sighs over the phone as he sits in a hotel room somewhere in the middle of the United States. "You travel so much, you don't get to see what's out there. Maybe if Carl Cox is in Chicago on a Wednesday, I'll go out to see him. That's probably the only time I'll go out."

Back in the day, when Bill was growing up in the Windy City and grooming himself for an eventual DMC championship, DJs were all about scratching and cutting up the beats. "[Canadian progressive house king] Max Graham, that's how he started," Bill says. "He used to play hip-hop when he was young. When I played with him one night [recently], he could really cut it up. [Scratching] is something that I've been doing for a long time, and it was something a lot of jocks used to do, but I stuck with it because it's become my signature."

More of the secrets to Bill's success might be locked away inside his new CD/DVD, *Behind the Decks*. It's a shift from his popular *Bangin' the Box* series, which coupled raging track selection and blinding mixes with an interactive CD-ROM. This time, fans can enjoy the complete Bad Boy experience—from music videos to computer visuals—in high-definition digital sound and vision. The CD/DVD combo is also a response to Internet piracy, a topic that hits the DJ close to home since he's one of the magnates behind the Mix Connection group of record labels.

"If you give people something like a DVD, something that has quality, they'll pay for it," he reasons. "If you're selling multi-platinum albums, in the range of 10 million copies, and you go down to seven million albums—yeah, that sucks, but at the end of the day, you're still rich. A lot of electronic artists, though, we might sell 50,000 copies, and when you cut that in half—sometimes even more, because the enthusiasts for this music are very computer-savvy—you're talking about a huge chunk. We weren't making millions in the first place, but when you hack that much into it, it can be really tough. A lot of dance music labels have gone out of business. A lot of people had to get other jobs outside of the music they love. It's sad and disheartening, but with the new pay-to-download sites that are coming along, I see a glimmer of hope."

Giving people their money's worth has always been Bill's approach to performance, and chopping up sound and making it sound as seamless and

dynamic as possible is his goal every time he steps up to the decks. "If all I did was play one record, blend it into another record and have a drink or something, it would bore the hell out of me," he laughs. "I don't know what I'd do. I'd probably go nuts. If you see me doing that, you know it's over for me."

You can become a victim of your own success, however. Being in such high demand has kept Bill away from the studio, where he's been labouring intermittently on a full-length artist album. Although he has managed to complete a number of singles, including "Everybody" and "Reconditioned," Bill wants to slow down long enough to complete the full record. "I was producing back when I first started DJing," Bill says. "I had a lot of records out and I was doing remixes, everything. I just got away from it. I started doing the mix CDs and touring a lot, and when you get away from it, the technology gets crazy. I'm old-school—I could produce something with all my old equipment, but you can't compete at the level of what's out there now. It takes a lot longer for me now."

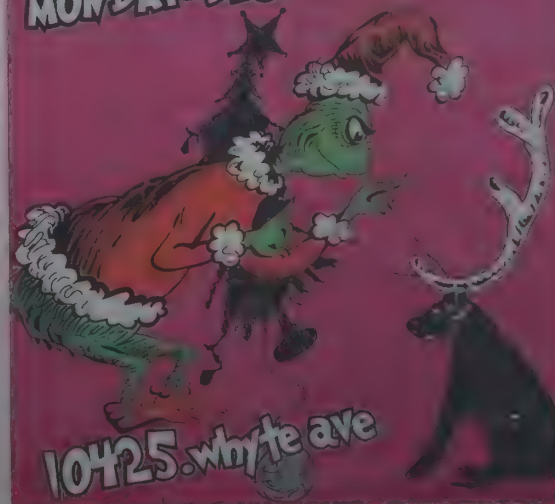
He might also be feeling heat from



his touring partner, Steve Smooth. The talented jock is also a prolific producer and a weird discovery for the Bad Boy. "Steve used to be my tour manager, and to be honest with you, he wasn't the best," Bill laughs. "I'd tell him that to his face, and I think he knows it. Sometimes it felt like I was tour managing. He's a lot better as an opening DJ, and he's a really good producer and a really good guy. It's good to have a guy like that on the road with you. I don't think people really know how good he is." ●

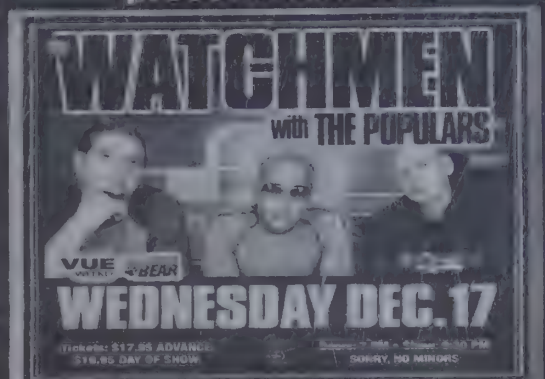
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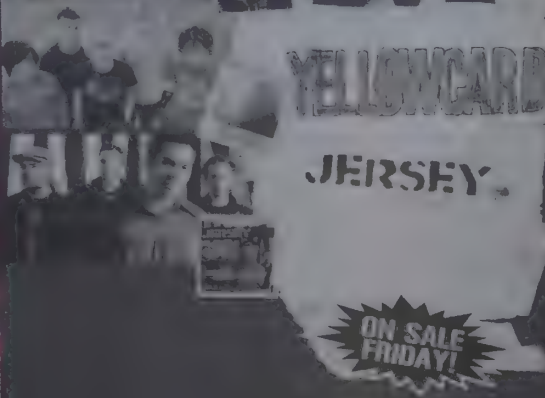
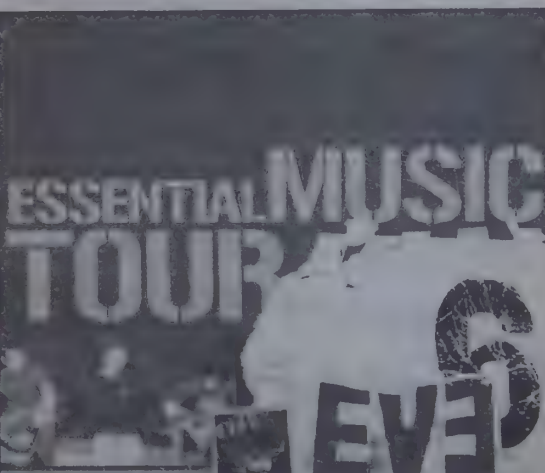


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5. TUPAC- RESURRECTION  
Soundtrack
6. BARENAKED LADIES  
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7. MATHIE
8. AC/DC : LIVE AT  
DOWNTOWN
9. LOONEY TUNES GOLDEN  
COLLECTION
10. CHRISTMAS CAROL

# NEW SOUNDS

**PROCHAZKA/DESPRÈS**  
THE NEW GOLDBERG VARIATIONS  
(ARKTOS)

What is it about the Goldberg Variations? Johann Sebastian Bach's 1742 composition of 30 variations on an unnamed aria is considered one of the finest sets of variations ever written. Not only is the piece virtuosic, but it communicates a stately melancholy as well, and seems inevitably connected to loss. It earned its sobriquet because of its early association with harpsichordist J.T. Goldberg, but these days it's more closely linked with the "late, great and more than a little crazy" Canadian pianist Glenn Gould.

The New Goldberg Variations have a story as well. American philanthropists Judy and Robert Goldberg were so fond of the original work that they chose it for their wedding. Years later, Robert began exploring the possibility of commissioning a new work also based on Bach's aria to celebrate the couple's 25th anniversary. Together

with their friend, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, they imagined a collaboration for cello and piano and realized their ideal with Kenneth Frazelle, Christopher Rouse, Peter Lieberman, John Corigliano, Richard Danielpour and Peter Schickele (a.k.a. P.D.Q. Bach, who contributes a fun, irreverent boogie-woogie variation). Sadly, Robert Goldberg was diagnosed with cancer halfway through the project, and so the work, which premiered in 1997, also became his memorial.

The New Goldberg Variations is an extraordinary legacy, and this new recording by cellist Tanya Prochazka and pianist Jacques Desprès, U of A faculty members who first performed the work at the reSound festival of new music in February of 2001, is a tribute to all its associations. For the most part, the disc retains the melancholy simplicity of the original and suggests something of Gould's sensibility, but Prochazka's cello adds a sensual dimension, especially in the movements written for solo cello. Without a doubt, a must-have.

★★★★★ —ALLISON KYDD

**VARIOUS ARTISTS**  
ROUGH TRADE 25: STOP ME IF YOU  
THINK YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE  
BEFORE...  
(ROUGH TRADE/SANCTUARY)

Any discriminating record collector owns a few platters that have entered the world through the Rough Trade filter. The seminal British retailer has influenced the tastes of indie kids far beyond its London headquarters, and the label it spawned has introduced the globe to Belle and Sebastian, Galaxie 500 and Mazzy Star. Now in its 25th year, the label is the British home to the Strokes, Adam Green, the Libertines, the Hidden Cameras and British Sea Power, and they've been showering the world with splendid double-disc compilations that cover every genre from leftfield electronica to post-punk.

This awkwardly-titled single-disc collection, however, is the real gem of the lot—it gives the label's current roster license to cover songs by Rough Trade bands past and present. So what you get are madly inventive versions of tunes like the Strokes' "Last Night" by the sassy Detroit Cobras and the Feelies' "Fa Ce La" redone by Eastern Lane. With repeated listens—and there will be many—you'll grow attached to the manic version of James Blood Ulmer's "Jazz Is the Teacher, Funk Is the Preacher" by Oneida, or the beautiful, soaring vocal of former Cocteau Twin Elizabeth Fraser's interpretation of Robert Wyatt's "At Last I Am Free." It's an exercise that few labels have attempted to such sparkling results—only Reprise Records' *Rubaiyat* comes immediately to mind—and it's a pleasantly anarchistic reminder why indie rules. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

**TERENCE TRENT D'ARBY**  
WILD CARD! THE JOKER'S EDITION  
(SANANDA)

Few records take you by surprise the way the latest disc from Terence Trent D'Arby does. D'Arby's closest brush with fame and acclaim came in 1987 with his debut *The Hardline According to...*, on which he announced himself as the heir apparent to Prince, infusing classic soul and R&B with a cosmopolitan sheen and maybe even a bit of mysticism. His subsequent albums fared poorly, probably because D'Arby was prone to bouts of amazing hubris that alienated fair-weather listeners and hardened the hearts of music critics who had little time to deal with the output of an arrogant crackpot.

Redubbing himself Sananda Maitreya—a name that apparently came to him in a dream—the humbled D'Arby has taken the indie route and come up with the devastating soul album he's always threatened to make. D'Arby is still blessed with one of the most distinctive voices in pop music, and on *Wild Card!* he slinks and dives through 19 tracks of amazing breadth, from silky, smooth ballads like "What Shall I Do?" to finely honed subterranean funk like "SRR-636" (which boasts a great disparaging shot at the music industry, "Get your wiggle on/Get sexy like Lenny"). On "Shalom," he recalls Motown's golden era with its muted horns, while "Drivin' Me Crazy" is propelled by a midnight breakbeat and a nagging Rhodé vamp. Look to the bumping "Sugar Free" for the most unusual juxtaposition, with a sombre choir providing the backdrop for D'Arby's perennially loveborn musings.

Despite trying moments like the saccharine "Testify," *Wild Card!* is filled with inspired, uninhibited creativity wrapped up in a smooth soul-pop coating that nearly reaches the point of excess. Only a genius could deliver lyrics like "No Goobers, no Raisinets/No Miracles, no Marvelettes" or "My lamb was getting trampled/But now his bleats are getting sampled." D'Arby's still a complete nutcase, but this could be the best soul album you've never heard. Surprises are nice. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

**THE OFFSPRING**  
SPLINTER  
(COLUMBIA/SONY)

It's apparent by the time you hit the third track on *Splinter*, "Long Way Home," what a huge debt the Offspring owes to fellow SoCal icons Bad Religion. High-octane riffs rushing to keep up with a breakneck rhythm, with singsong lyrics shouted over top—it's a heart-pounding formula that has served Greg Graffin and company well over the years, and gave Dexter Holland and his merry band a starting point. It's nice to be reminded of these influences, because once songs like "Pretty Fly for a White Guy" caused the Offspring to be lumped in with goofballs like Sugar Ray and Smash Mouth, we forgot how pre-major-label discs *Ignition* and *Smash* well and truly rocked.

With *Splinter*, the band revisits those old SoCal roots looking for fresh ideas, and arrives at mixed results. Even with its socially conscious lyrics, "Hit Me" is a bald confession to suits hungry for a big

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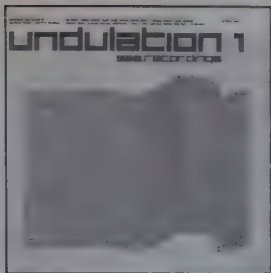
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college-rock hit to carry them into the next quarter, while "The Worst Hangover Ever" is about as disposable as they come. However, the surf anthem "Da Hui" is a pleasant shout, as is "The Noose," which recalls the charm of those big, vague anthems of yore about the evils of the Man. Kids will dig this. Older listeners might as well dig up those old records and go snowboarding.

★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

#### RYAN ADAMS LOVE IS HELL PT. 2 (LOST HIGHWAY/UNIVERSAL)

Some readers may recall my review from a few weeks back in which I called Ryan Adams's *Rock 'n' Roll* "a whitestream" and pondered whether the former Whiskeytown frontman had been indulging in some ill-prepared pharmaceuticals. Well, *Love Is Hell Pt. 1* wasn't much better, but his companion makes me think that all hope is not lost with Mr. Adams. The heartbreak within these songs seems to explain everything—at least, if you assume they're autobiographical. *Part 2* is the sound of a man realizing the drugs and the booze don't work; it's the howl of a broken lover coming off a woozy high, feeling the headache ebbing back into his veins.

The unfathomable hurt Adams channels in songs like "City Rain, City Streets" is palpable—a lyric like "I stuck you over a million times and you died" conveys more pain than any crafty wordplay could summon up. Much of the material is set around the infamous Hotel Chelsea in New York City, where Leonard Cohen went looking for the Madonna amongst the whores, and where Sid killed Nancy. This is where love is hell, and soon all Adams wants to do is leave. "I played your song, I got the melody all wrong," he sings on the final track, "Hotel Chelsea Nights," pleading for sleep while he's strung out like some Christmas lights. Could Adams be playing the Shakespeare card, deceptively making like Ham before pulling a Henry V and taking down the French? *Love Is Hell Pt. 2* may be a sign of greater things to come. ★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS UNDULATION 1 (SAW/EMI)

The greatest misconception about progressive house is that it lacks funk. Certainly, when you hear a DJ using a brain-numbing sequence of reverb-packed drums and endless electronic noodling in the place of a soul, you get what amounts to the dancefloor

equivalent of jam-band music. Sure, it's fun for a while, but eventually you look for something else.

Such is not the case with New York City's Satoshi Tomiie, who consistently digs up the kind of progressive that bumps and hustles like a mutha, with "house" getting particular emphasis in his inclusive style. That's why his label, Saw Records, has such a rich catalogue of stellar tracks—and many of the best are showcased on this inaugural retrospective, mixed by Tomiie and fellow label honcho Hector Romero. If you can get around the meandering "Rumble Funk" by Blue Haze, you'll quickly discover a butt-shaking blend of dubbed-out tech-funk, spotlighting excellent production and dancefloor dynamics. Among the standouts are "Kenjin" by Cass, a fired-up electro house track that seems more energetic with every listen, and Lexicon Avenue's absorbing "Why R U Here?" 2003 hasn't seen a comp this good since Deep Dish's *Toronto* set for Global Underground. If you're in the need for sophisticated boom-boom, this disc will deliver. It's worth far more than the sticker price. ★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS BYOP: CALGARY DOES CONNORS (SAVED BY RADIO/CATCH AND RELEASE)

Around the *Vue* office, not a week goes by where Stompin' Tom doesn't get a spin on the office stereo. Let's face it:

the dude is about as indie as they come. When a band says, "Yeah, we're indie, we're keeping it real," Stompin' Tom ought to come around the corner and smash those babies up with an empty whiskey bottle. He's traveled across the country, played in every stinking hole from here to Etobicoke and still makes that same ol' shuffling rhythm seem fresh. He's the Canadian identity personified, simply because he never gives up.

Which is why Calgary's finest have assembled to pay tribute to him with this mix of reverential readings and off-the-wall interpretations. On the worshipful side, we have Allen Baeke-land ("Ripped Off Winkle") and Matt Masters and the Gentlemen of the Rodeo ("Rubberhead"), while radical reworks are handed in by the Dudes ("Luke's Guitar"), Jackson Phibes ("She Don't Speak English") and Falconhawk ("I Don't Know How to Fix the Damn Thing Blues"). There are also interesting bits by the Spam Avenger, who mangles telephone sales operators into his subversive reading of "The Consumer," U of C professor Andrew King and writer Sean Marchetto.

The real revelation, though, is Laurie Matheson's version of "Margo's Got the Cargo," which transforms the ditty into a Maritime dirge and exposes the sad, sad heart lying at its core. Like everything else on this disc, it's not a perfect rendition, but it's done with a lot of love and respect. Funny that no one did "The Hockey Song," though. I guess you can't top that kind of perfection. ★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

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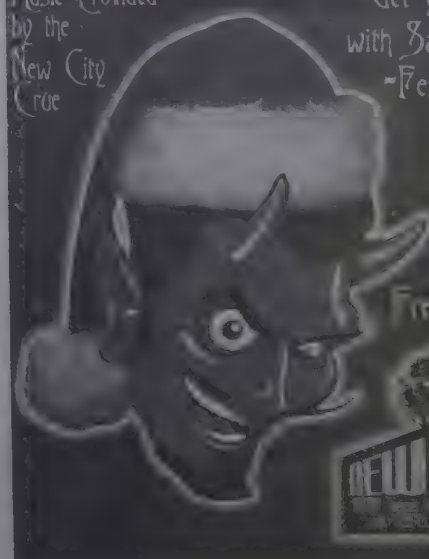
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## MUSIC

# Time runs out for the Watchmen

Canrock staples say  
goodbye to their  
fans with a final  
cross-country tour

By DAVE JOHNSTON

**T**hat's it. The Watchmen are packing their bags and going home. Well, sort of.

After spending more than a decade slogging down the rock 'n' roll highway, the trio of Danny Greaves, Joey Serlin and Ken Tizzard have figured it was about time to move on. Instead of quietly fading away, though, the band is packing up the bus once last time for a final cross-country tour—but like everything else, nothing has worked out according to plan.

"We would have liked to have ended it in Winnipeg, because that's where it all started," sighs Serlin, the group's guitarist, "but our last show will be in Boston on New Year's Eve."

The band was certain about closing up the Watchmen three months ago, Serlin says. At the conclusion of their tour in support of their last album, *Slomotion*, the band was hesitant to record another record right away. "There was stuff we wanted to do on our own," the guitarist says. "We took shows, maybe a couple a month, but when the time came to reconvene and make a decision about another record, the enthusiasm wasn't there. Rather than go through the motions, we decided to call it.

"Over the years, we've developed very distinct personalities and [ideas of] how we want things to sound," he adds. "We all want to put ourselves in positions where we don't have to compromise ourselves anymore."

The farewell tour is happening because of the fans, Serlin adds. As an added bonus, a recording of each show will be posted on the band's website ([www.the-watchmen.com](http://www.the-watchmen.com)) for fans to download. "It was a chance

**PREVIEW**  
**ROCK**

to say goodbye properly," Serlin says. "We want it to be special—the fans are all posting their dream setlists, so we're going back and learning songs that we haven't touched in years."

Combing through their old albums has given Serlin an affirming perspective on what the band has achieved. "When we did *McLaren*

showing themselves through industry doors. It was a different time.

"There's been so many moments you could call 'defining' that it seems like the past 12 years have been one moment," he continues. "We've been through so much as a band and as friends. We've watched each other get married and have kids. We've toured the world together. We've been through the peaks and valleys of being in a Canadian band together. Being a Canadian band is another monster—it's trying and it's tough."

**SERLIN IS CERTAIN** that singer Greaves will produce his own solo album, while bassist Tizzard is working in Vancouver on a new record by former Big Wreck frontman Ian Thornley. "We're all going to stay pretty busy," he promises. Serlin, for his part, has started a new band, Red line, with former Headstones bass

player Tim White. "I'm singing, which is cool," he laughs. "It's a new challenge. Danny's been singing my songs for years, and he's done an amazing job with it, but in the back of my mind I've always wanted to sing them. Now it's a case of shit or get off the pot."

The guitarist is also producing an album by local band the Populars, which consists of members from Mike Plume's former band ("I think Dave Klym is one of the most amazing guitarists," Serlin enthuses), and contributed a song to the new album by Canadian *Idol* champion Ryan Malcolm. "They had this crazy Nashville-style hit factory going on," Serlin says of the process. "They got 40 writers from around the world and we all wrote songs for six 12-hour days. They had 120 songs to choose from, and they picked 12 of them—and one of mine made it. It could help through the lean times," he adds with a laugh.

And, like Greaves, Serlin has begun scoring films, including a recent job for *Don't Call Me Tonto*, a comedy Western filmed in Alberta starring David Hasselhoff. "It was a challenge," Serlin laughs. "[The filmmakers] wanted a cowboy-and-Indian feel to the whole thing, so I had to pull up some country chops, which I've never really done before."

Walking away from a much-loved Canrock band is going to be a new experience as well. "I haven't lived with the decision for years, so it's tough to project how I might feel down the road," Serlin laughs. "Right now, I feel very confident about making the right decision. I feel very motivated and excited by other things." ●

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Furnace Room back in 1992, we did that all on our own," he says. "There was a cottage industry in Canadian music back then—everybody was putting out their own records and

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# Thank God for Friday

Claire Denis's *Friday Night* is the year's biggest video buried treasure

BY PAUL MATWYCHUK

I think Claire Denis's *Friday Night* is the best movie of 2003. I can't think of another film that I've loved in quite this way—and I'll admit that part of my affection for it is probably due to the fact that probably hardly anyone else in Edmonton has seen it or even heard of it. It's my own precious little discovery. The Rogers Video outlet that I rented it from doesn't even include it on the splashy "New December Releases!" calendar by the store entrance and they've only stocked one lonely little DVD copy of the film on their shelves. The *Edmonton Journal's* weekly roundup of new video releases never mentioned it (which is no surprise—the *Journal* has an astonishing ability to overlook the most interesting new video title almost every single week), and an article about Claire Denis in last week's *SEE Magazine* went to far as to claim *Friday Night* is unavailable for rental in Edmonton and erroneously identified the film as a thriller.

In fact, *Friday Night* is one of the simplest yet most heartstoppingly beautiful romances I've seen in years. It's based on a novel by Emmanuelle Bernheim (who co-wrote *Under the Sand* and *Swimming Pool* with François Ozon), but the story has the simplicity of a poem. Here's the setup: Laure (Valérie Lemercier) is a 40-year-old Parisian woman spending her last night in her old apartment before moving in with her boyfriend. Laure's plans for the night involve driving across town to have dinner with some married friends, but Paris has been crippled by a transit strike and she soon finds herself mired in a hopeless traffic jam. As

Laure sits behind her wheel, daydreaming and idly listening to the radio, a stranger named Jean (Vincent Lindon) knocks on her window and asks if she'd mind giving him a lift. Impulsively, Laure agrees—and although not much dialogue passes between them, her attraction to her rumpled but handsome passenger is obvious (and mutual). Before long, Laure gives up hope of ever making her dinner appointment and instead decides to check into a hotel with Jean and spend the night making love with him.

That's pretty much the entire plot—and if you're thinking to yourself, "Gee, this movie doesn't exactly sound action-packed," well, you're right. *Friday Night* contains several long, long sequences of Laure doing

## REVUE VIDEO

nothing but taping up cardboard boxes or sitting in traffic listening to the radio, yet it's one of the most exuberantly cinematic experiences I've ever had at the movies.

**FIRST OF ALL**, the cinematography by Agnès Godard (who also shot Denis's *Beau Travail* and *Trouble Every Day*) is absolutely breathtaking. The opening tableaux of the sun gradually setting over Paris are worth the cost of the rental all by themselves; Godard has an uncanny way of capturing the seductive, otherworldly feel a large city takes on at night, of pulling you into her images and making every lit window and late-night restaurant and storefront display seem full of mysterious possibilities. (Dickon Hinchliffe's gorgeous, dreamlike score only adds to the mood of hushed anticipation.) Even when nothing is "happening" in *Friday Night*, everything onscreen seems pulsing with life—Denis and Godard throw in several shots of vapour escaping from Laure's car (exhaust fumes, Jean's cigarette smoke waiting

through his window, the steam from Laure's damp hair as she dries it over the heater), and it's as if the car itself is restlessly breathing in and out.

That's also what makes *Friday Night* so cinematic: Denis tells almost her entire story through images, not words. She doesn't give Laure and Jean lots of meet-cute dialogue to let us know they're drawn to each other. Instead, she shows us all the fleeting, intimate observations that are what people meeting for the first time really find sexy—the way Jean reaches under his shirt to scratch his shoulder, or how Laure luxuriantly stretches her legs in a way that shows she knows they're her best feature. Denis's camerawork is never intrusive, and yet by the time Laure and Jean check into their hotel room together it feels like the celluloid is registering every emotion they're feeling, right down to the tiniest nuance. (Neither Laure nor Jean has what you'd call "movie-star good looks," but the sex scene that follows is so believable and natural and unself-conscious that it becomes tremendously erotic in a way that Hollywood love scenes rarely are.)

The closest Hollywood equivalent to Denis's approach can probably be found in Sofia Coppola's *Lost in Translation*, and if you enjoyed that film's quiet tone, its evocation of the specific mood of a foreign city and the way its two lead performers seemed not to be acting so much as behaving, you might respond to *Friday Night* as well. Either way, I hope I can convince you to take a chance on renting this movie. Laure took a gamble and got the best night of sex in her life; when I gambled on renting *Friday Night*, I discovered my favourite movie of the year—and it was almost as exciting. ●

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# BUFFALO SOLDIERS

This jaunty misanthrope has a seductive, nonchalant glitter and an unshakably mocking attitude in his post-Vietnam cynicism. *Buffalo Soldiers* feels almost avant-garde. —J. Haberman, Village Voice



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# Dunces were warriors

Antiwar satire doesn't get dumber or smugger than *Buffalo Soldiers*

By MINISTER FAUST

**B**uffalo Soldiers is the dumb, uninsightful, human-hating film by Gregor Jordan based on Robert O'Connor's novel about American GIs stationed in Cold War Germany during the fall of the Berlin Wall. Joaquin Phoenix stars as one-note Ray Elwood, an Army supply company clerk who moonlights as a major fence and wannabe arms dealer—Radar O'Reilly meets *The Sopranos*. He

gets into far deeper trouble when a new sergeant, Robert Lee (Scott Glenn), begins an anti-corruption campaign beginning in Elwood's duodenum. Elwood retaliates by dating Lee's daughter (Anna Paquin), and then everything goes screwy when all the other army criminals attempt turn their base into an NWA album.

## REVUE SATIRE

The problem is that this film isn't about soldiers—far from it. Most of the army grunts in the film, we're told, were convicted criminals given the chance to serve out longer sentences, but in the army rather than in jail. Since they're unreformed, they simply continue fencing goods

and dealing drugs. They aren't soldiers, and the film has nothing to say about war or men who thirst for the greatest abomination of all. They're just bored street thugs.

But wait, you say—maybe these army hoodlums are intended as a metaphor for their Cold War masters. Uh, good try, but no. Even though *Buffalo Soldiers* is set in exotic 1989 Germany, every character except one is American. Besides playing Public Enemy's 1989 classic "Fight the Power" (a song whose placement and lyrics are only accidentally ironic) in a GI bar catering almost exclusively to white patrons, the film doesn't situate itself in its time or place. Ah, that must be the point, you say. They're criminals who don't care! There's even a scene where some stoned soldiers can't remember if whether they're in East or in West Germany—or even what country they're in at all. Isn't that the point?

**NO, IT'S SIMPLY** a cheap shot at a group of people who are all-too-easy to despise in this film, poor whites, Blacks and Hispanics recruited into the army by the prison-judicial-industrial complex. Had crime not been their route in, it would've been economic conscription. *Buffalo Soldiers* isn't interested in exploring the reasons for anyone's shameful behaviour or helping us to understand economic, political or social realities. Instead it takes the same approach as James Toback's 1999 *Black and White* by pushing the misanthropic dismissal, "Aren't all human beings shitty?"

In one scene, tank drivers on hero-in accidentally burn two innocent men to death, but their demise is tragic only for a couple of seconds; then we're back to the joke of the junkies driving their tank back to location.



There's no army or civilian police investigation of these deaths, by the way. Because, after all, this is the army, see, and everyone and everything is stupid and corrupt and meaningless, see, and nothing matters, see? And we liberal anti-war civilians can sit back in our movie seats and couches and sneer at how stupid and evil and corrupt all these enlisted poor people in the army are, and how gutless and incompetent their officers are. And wow, it sure is nice to feel superior.

**IRONICALLY**, one of the film's few moments of honest humanity comes when the dimwitted, Frank Burns-esque colonel played by Ed Harris realizes his own limitations, but none of the other characters learn anything about themselves. The film has nothing to say, but wraps itself in the illusion that it does. The only standout performance is the always-excellent Scott Glenn as the hardass, possibly psychopathic career sergeant who wants to destroy Elwood.

*Buffalo Soldiers* isn't a film about war, warriors during peacetime or even crime as the real meaning of war. It's infinitely less insightful than the Hughes Brothers film *Dead Presidents*, about Black and Hispanic

Vietnam veterans who come home as broken brown men with no prospects in racist America and use their army training to pull off bank robberies. *Dead Presidents* wasn't perfect, but it had far more authentic characterizations, paid closer attention to setting and time, displayed a truer understanding of race and class and possessed greater photographic and musical power. (The hip hop beat-score in *Buffalo Soldiers* sounds very post-1989.) And race is this film's Waterloo of anti-intelligence and counter-insight. The historical buffalo soldiers were enslaved West Africans forced into the Anglo-American army to murder Native Americans, a two-genocides-for-one coupon. This film is named after them, but attempts no explanation of its own title, nor of the realities that reproduce that historical reality today. ☹

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ODEON FILMS

# In (faint) praise of older women

Nicholson and Keaton coast through safe, bland *Something's Gotta Give*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

**S**omething's Gotta Give is a good example of what film critic Jeffrey Wells likes to call "copper-pot comedies," which he defines as movies in which, underlying all the action, is "a worship of swanky homes and great-looking furnishings—shiny copper pots, beautiful wooden chairs, awesome carpets, et cetera. As dopey as this sounds, great-looking furnishings have a way of inhibiting a comedy. Don't ask me how, but they do."

The first two-thirds of *Something's Gotta Give* take place at the gorgeous Hamptons beach house of playwright

Erica Berry (Diane Keaton), who's described by her sister Zoe as "the most important woman playwright since Lillian Hellman," even though what we see of her work looks less like Caryl Churchill and more like the kind of creaky dinner-theatre sex farces that second-tier sitcom actors of the '70s used to star in during the

## REVUE COMEDY

off-season. Anyway, Erica's made enough money from her plays to purchase her Hamptons getaway, and writer/director Nancy Meyers is obviously in love with the place too; she can't resist showing off the spectacular ocean view from Erica's study, the state-of-the-art brushed-steel refrigerator in the kitchen and the beautiful bowls and dishes that Erica uses to serve dinner to her daughter Marin (Amanda Peet) and her new, much older boyfriend, a rascally horn dog

who calls himself Harry Sanborn but is obviously just Jack Nicholson operating under a transparent alias.

You can see exactly where this entire story is going five minutes in, but it still takes Meyers nearly 130 minutes to get there: even though Erica and Harry can't stand each other at first—she thinks he's an emotionally immature chauvinist, he thinks she's an uptight old prune—eventually they come to realize that they're perfect for each other as Harry learns to act his age and appreciate older women, while Erica loosens up and begins thinking of herself as beautiful again. Meanwhile, lurking around the edges of the conveniently plotted script is a hunky young doctor played by Keanu Reeves who also sets out to woo Erica. They may seem like a slightly unlikely couple, but I can certainly see where Reeves would be attracted to a flighty giggler like Keaton after spending all that time in Zion with that grim-faced party-



# We are Siamese, if you please

Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear make inseparable co-stars in charming *Stuck on You*

BY BRIAN GIBSON

There are more than a few brother combos serving up American movies these days. The duo that doesn't make the slo-mo, 360-degree rotating-camera-shot, wannabe-*Star Wars*-epics or the comic dramas with oddball characters putting people through wood chippers... well, that would be the Farrelly Brothers.

Back in 1994, the Rhode Island pair made *Dumb and Dumber*, a Two Stooges road trip that plunged into toilet bowl humour and, unforgivably, created an overflow of crass *American Pie* ripoffs to rise up in its wake. Two years ago, *Shallow Hal* was a misguided comedy centring on superficial Jack Black's realization that, underneath Gwyneth Paltrow in a fat suit was... Gwyneth Paltrow. The wrongheaded message that skinny beauties were hidden beneath overweight women was propped up by easy obesity jokes that quickly wore thin. In between those valleys, though, the twosome has scaled some comedic peaks. The Amish bowling movie *Kinship* was all strikes, *There's Something About Mary* was a perfectly paced mix of gross-out laughs and character-driven comedy and *Me, Myself and Irene* somehow managed to find a lot of humour in schizophrenia and the foul-mouthed genius progeny of a mixed marriage.

The brothers' latest, *Stuck on You*, about twins conjoined by nine

inches of flesh above the waist, pilots an amiable middle course between their gut-busting successes and simple-minded failures. The movie wisely avoids any dumb frat-house antics, although its characters aren't as memorable as the colourful supporting players in the Farrellys' other films. While not as side-splitting as the writing/directing duo's best work, *Stuck on You* is pretty much impossible not to like, with its pleasant charm and plenty of laughs supporting a sentimental message.

**BOB AND WALT TENOR** (Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear) have never been separated because Bob, who has most of their liver, insists that the 50/50 survival odds for his more-quickly-aging brother are too risky. The stuck-together, athletic pair grew up and still live in Martha's Vineyard,

## REVIEW COMEDY

where they own Quikee Burger, a three-minute-or-your-meal's-free fast food joint where they're also the cooks. Bob's a shy, mop-haired wallflower, while the older Walt is an actor with an eye for the ladies. When Walt decides that he wants to pursue his thespian dreams in Hollywood, Bob agrees to tag along, half-hoping to finally meet his Internet pen pal, May (Wen Yann Shih).

There's a lot of amusing, not-over-the-top physical comedy in *Stuck on You*, especially when the brothers play sports. The attached pair are a two-walled fortress in the net for their hockey team, give their opponent the four-hand jab in the ring, and are QB, receiver and blocker all in one football play. Sex provides some interesting obstacles, and Bob's stage fright causes

him to suffer panic attacks before he calms down and quietly hangs behind Walt as he performs in the local theatre as Truman Capote.

**DAMON IS DOPILY LIKABLE** as the introverted bookworm Bob, a lovelorn "Casanever" who gives his roguishly affable, wink-wink-nudge-nudge brother all the crossword answers. ("What's a four-letter word for snatch?" "Grab." "Oh, yeah. Right.") Cher pops up as a bitchy superdiva obsessed with the current wattage of her starpower, and Eva Mendes nicely underplays Bob's ditzy, bubbly sexpot girlfriend April. May might be the stereotypically meek, demure Asian girl, but her relationship with Bob—who at first tries to hide his joint situation with Walt from her—is sweet enough.

The brothers bicker and fight, most amusingly when Walt gets drunk so that Bob, the "designated walker" with most of their liver, will feel the effects. But there's no serious sense of crisis in the movie, which ends with a nicely surreal musical number. Kinnear evinces sharp comic timing and Seymour Cassel has some good turns as Morty O'Reilly, a golf-cart-driving, toupee-wearing weasel of a casting agent. (When Morty refers to the two of them as Siamese twins, Bob testily snaps back, "We're American.") An assortment of oddball characters round out the film, from a Massachusetts local who was never the same after getting a dart in his skull, to a constantly napping L.A. hotel manager.

*Stuck on You* is a warmly inclusive movie that embraces differences and champions the mentally handicapped and physically abnormal of a small-town, close-knit community while taking some nice shots at vapid, svelte



narcissists and the empty glitter of Tinseltown. The Farrellys wrap their message in enough inspired and surprisingly subtle comic situations, and tie it up with enough endearing characters, to make *Stuck on You* a rather heartwarming package for this chilly

time of year. **B**

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Written and directed by Peter and Bobby Farrelly • Starring Matt Damon, Greg Kinnear and Cher • Opens Fri, Dec 12

*Holiday Entertainment*

**"A TRIUMPH OF EPIC STORYTELLING."**  
David Aisen, NEWSWEEK

**THE LORD OF THE RINGS**  
THE RETURN OF THE KING

SUBJECT TO CLASSIFICATION

**THE JOURNEY CONTINUES WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH!**

YOU COULD WIN HUNGRY QUEST VISIT AND  
OF [www.abc.comcast.com](http://www.abc.comcast.com) FOR MORE INFORMATION

Starring Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, Keanu Reeves and Amanda Peet • Opens Fri, Dec 12

pooper Carrie-Anne Moss.

**MEYERS UNDOUBTEDLY GOT** her first choices when it came to casting the film's two leads. Nicholson and Keaton may not do anything particularly fresh or unexpected in their performances here, but their considerable charisma and the years of goodwill they've built up with movie audiences do a lot to make this material sparkle. In the scenes where Nicholson finds himself alone with Keaton and starts turning on the charm, the two actors' stock gestures—the way Nicholson lifts his eyebrow as he makes some irresistibly incorrigible remark, the way Keaton will respond to him with a flurry of stutters, nervous laughs and hand flutters—can seem as timeless and ritualistic as the behaviour of the stock characters in a piece of *commedia dell'arte*.

Keaton's work in this film has already won her the Best Actress award from the National Board of

Review; nobody takes that organization seriously, but she probably does deserve some kind of prize from someone for rising so gracefully above all the cheap shots Meyers takes at her character. You've probably seen (and cringed at) the moment in the film's trailer where Nicholson accidentally sees Keaton naked and staggers away in horror, muttering, "I'm sorry, I'm sorry. Oh, God, am I sorry!" There's also a sequence late in the film where Keaton's love life seems to be in ruins and Meyers does a montage showing Keaton spending the next few days crying nonstop, wailing on her bed and blubbering away helplessly as she writes the final act of her latest play. The audience I was with seemed to get a kick out of this scene, but it seemed like a pretty condescending gag to me.

But then again, Meyers has a fatal weakness for easy gags. There's obviously nothing wrong with making a movie whose message is that women in their 50s are attractive too, but

instead of exploring her characters' hangups (or society's dismissive attitude toward "older" women) in a sophisticated, sexy way, Meyers settles for jokes about Viagra and shots of Nicholson, disoriented after a heart attack, wandering down a corridor with his ass hanging out of his hospital gown. And lots of beautiful patio furniture and expensive white clothes. And Paul Simon on the soundtrack. Gag. And it's all being sold with a trailer that makes fun of Diane Keaton's body and a poster that air-brushes the wrinkles out of Keaton's and Nicholson's faces to the point of unrecognizability. Obviously, somewhere between making a movie celebrating older people and then selling it, something had to give. **B**

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Written and directed by Nancy Meyers • Starring Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, Keanu Reeves and Amanda Peet • Opens Fri, Dec 12



## NEW THIS WEEK

**L'Auberge Espagnole** (P) Romain Duris, Audrey Tautou, Judith Godrèche and Kelly Reilly star in *When the Cat's Away* writer/director Cédric Klapisch's multilingual comedy about a young Frenchman who spends an eventful year in Barcelona sharing a cramped apartment with six other university students from across Europe.

**Blizzard** (CO, FP) Brenda Blethyn, Christopher Plummer and the voice of Whoopi Goldberg are featured in director Levar Burton's Christmas-themed family fantasy about a young ice skater who befriends a magical reindeer.

**Buffalo Soldiers** (M) Joaquin Phoenix, Ed Harris, Scott Glenn and Anna Paquin star in director Gregory Jordan's irreverent, allegedly "anti-American" military satire about an amoral clerk stationed in West Germany in 1989 who cheerfully conducts a profitable drug-dealing operation right under the noses of his superior officers. Based on the novel by Robert O'Connor. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Dec 12-15 (7 and 9pm)*

**The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King** (CO, FP) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen and Liv Ullmann star in the long-awaited concluding chapter of director Peter Jackson's epic film adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy of fantasy novels about a band of hobbits, trolls, elves, wizards and humans who embark on a quest to destroy an evil, all-powerful ring. (*Opens Wednesday*)

**Love Don't Cost a Thing** (CO, FP) Nick Cannon, Christina Milian and Steve Harvey star in *Let's Talk About Sex* director Troy Beyer's remake of the 1987 teen comedy *Can't Buy Me Love*, about an unpopular teenager who decides to improve his social standing by hiring a gorgeous cheerleader to pose as his girlfriend.

**Secretary** (M) Maggie Gyllenhaal and James Spader star in director Steven Shainberg's offbeat romantic comedy about a mousy secretary who blossoms personally and sexually when she enters into a sadomasochistic affair with her new boss. Based on a story by Mary Galt-skill. Showing with local director Kendra Sherrick's short film *The End of May*. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, Dec 11 (7pm)*

**Something's Gotta Give** (CO, FP) Jack Nicholson, Diane Keaton, Keanu Reeves and Amanda Peet star in *What Women Want* director Nancy Meyers's romantic comedy about a middle-aged rascal who re-evaluates his lifelong preference for dating much

younger women when he finds himself falling in love with the middle-aged mother of his latest trophy girlfriend.

**Stick on You** (CO, FP) Matt Damon, Greg Kinnear, Cher and Eva Mendes star in *There's Something About Mary* directors Peter and Bobby Farrelly's wacky comedy about a pair of Siamese twins whose close relationship is threatened when one of the brothers decides to go to Hollywood and pursue his dream of becoming an actor.

## FIRST-RUN MOVIES

**Bad Santa** (CO, FP) Billy Bob Thornton, Tony Cox, Bernie Mac and Lauren Graham star in *Ghost World* director Terry Zwigoff's ultra-cynical Yuletide comedy about an alcoholic, down-at-the-heel thief who plans to rob a department store while working as a mall Santa, only to have his conscience pricked when he befriends a lonely eight-year-old boy.

**Brother Bear** (CO) The voices of Joaquin Phoenix, Rick Moranis and Dave Thomas are featured in this Disney animated adventure about a vengeful native hunter who learns some valuable lessons about life and nature when he is magically transformed into a bear. Songs by Phil Collins.

**Dr. Seuss' The Cat in the Hat** (CO, FP) Mike Myers, Alec Baldwin, Kelly Preston and Dakota Fanning star in director Bo Welch's film version of the classic children's book about a boisterous feline who pays an unwitting visit on two kids while their mother is gone, and gleefully sets to work destroying their house.

**Elephant** (GA) Eric Deulen, Alex Frost and John Robinson star in *My Own Private Idaho* writer/director Gus van Sant's disquieting, defiantly non-didactic Palme d'Or-winning drama, inspired by the Columbine massacre, about a day in the life of an average American high school that is shattered by a sudden outbreak of violence.

**Elf** (CO, FP) Will Ferrell, James Caan and Zooey Deschanel star in *Swingers* director Jon Favreau's fish-out-of-water holiday comedy about a human man who was raised as an elf at the North Pole and who now travels to New York City hoping to locate his biological father.

**Gothika** (CO, FP) Halle Berry, Penélope Cruz and Robert Downey Jr. star in *The Crimson Rivers* director Mathieu Kassovitz's supernatural thriller about a criminal psychologist who wakes up confined in a mental institution for the murder of her husband, a crime she has absolutely no memory of committing.

**The Haunted Mansion** (CO, FP) Eddie Murphy, Terence Stamp, Marsha Thomason and Jennifer Tilly star in *Stuart Little* director Rob Minkoff's effects-heavy comedy, based on the Disney theme park attraction, about a family that encounters all manner of ghosts and poltergeists during a visit to a haunted house.

**Honey** (CO, FP) Jessica Alba, Mekhi Phifer, Lil' Romeo and Joy Bryant star in director Billie Woodruff's gotta-dream musical drama about a gutsy young dancer from the wrong side of the tracks whose blossoming career as a music video choreographer is threatened by her sexually predatory mentor.

**The Last Samurai** (CO, FP) Tom Cruise, Ken Watanabe, Billy Connolly and Timothy Spall star in *Glory* director Edward Zwick's historical epic about an alcoholic Civil War veteran who travels to Japan to train and modernize the emperor's troops, but decides to switch sides after being exposed to the honour code of the samurai warriors the emperor is determined to wipe out.

**Looney Tunes: Back in Action** (CO, FP) Brendan Fraser and Jenna Elfman star alongside dozens of beloved Warner Brothers cartoon characters in *Grellins* director Joe Dante's globe-hopping blend of animation and live action, in which Bugs Bunny hooks up with a former Hollywood stuntman to track down a legendary lost gemstone.

**The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers** (CO, FP) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen and Liv Ullmann star in this extended version of director Peter Jackson's epic film adaptation of the second volume in J.R.R. Tolkien's beloved fantasy epic about a quest to destroy an evil, all-powerful ring.

**Love Actually** (CO, FP) Hugh Grant, Liam Neeson, Emma Thompson, Alan Rickman, Keira Knightley, Colin Firth and Laura Linney star in writer/director Richard Curtis's all-star ensemble romantic comedy, which tells eight interlocking stories about various Londoners (including the prime minister of England) falling in and out of love during the Christmas season.

**Master and Commander: The Far Side of the World** (CO, FP) Russell Crowe and Paul Bettany star in *Witness* director Peter Weir's waterlogged adventure yarn, based on the novels of Patrick O'Brian, in which 19th-century British sea captain Jack Aubrey and ship surgeon Stephen Maturin brave storms and cannon-fire as they pursue a French "super-frigate" from Cape Horn to the Galapagos Islands.

**The Matrix: Revolutions** (FP) Keanu Reeves, Carrie-Anne Moss, Laurence Fishburne and Hugo Weaving star in the final

The pundits seem pretty much united in the belief that Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, which opens this Wednesday, is the best of the trilogy. Best Actor nominee Viggo Mortensen, who plays Aragorn, is a favorite to win the Best Supporting Actor nomination for his performance as Galadriel, the hobbit who saves the world. The series' reliance on elaborate, cutting-edge computer effects to alter his voice and give him Galadriel's huge eyes, scrawny physique and otherworldly presence almost disqualify him from the Oscar competition, the same way performance-enhancing drugs render athletes ineligible for Olympic medals, but others argue that there's no real difference between the CGI effects Jackson used on Serkis and the makeup that helped Neale Keenan and Martin Landau win Oscars for *The Hours* and *Witness*. The debate undoubtedly continues to rage on listservs even



installment of directors Andy and Larry Wachowski's groundbreaking sci-fi trilogy about a rebel army's life-or-death battle against the machines that have enslaved most of mankind within a computer-generated virtual world.

**The Missing** (CO, FP) Cate Blanchett, Tommy Lee Jones, Evan Rachel Wood and Val Kilmer star in *A Beautiful Mind* director Ron Howard's grim Western about a man who returns home to his ungrateful family years after abandoning them, but must leave them again to rescue his granddaughter when she is kidnapped by a band of outlaw army deserters.

**My Life Without Me** (P) Sarah Polley, Scott Speedman, Amanda Plummer and Mark Ruffalo star in *Things I Never Told You* writer/director Isabel Coixet's drama about a young woman who learns she will die of cancer in three months and sets to work lying up the loose ends of her life, all the while keeping her imminent demise a secret from her family.

**Mystic River** (FP) Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins star in *Unforgotten* director Clint Eastwood's moody drama, set in working-class Boston, about three childhood friends whose traumatic memories of the past are revived when one, now a police detective, begins to suspect another of killing the third's daughter. Based on the novel by Dennis Lehane.

**Scary Movie 3** (FP) Anna Faris, Charlie

Sheen, Leslie Nielsen, Queen Latifah and Denise Richards star in the latest installment of the popular series of raunchy horror-movie spoofs, featuring send-ups of such films as *The Ring*, *The Others*, *The Matrix* and *Sigors*. Directed by David Zucker (*The Naked Gun*)

**The School of Rock** (FP) Jack Black, Joan Cusack and Mike White (who wrote the screenplay) star in *Dazed and Confused* director Richard Linklater's comedy about a would-be rock star who takes a job as a substitute teacher at an uppity private school and immediately begins transforming his classroom of 10-year-olds into a kick-ass rock band.

**Timeline** (CO, FP) Paul Walker, Frances O'Connor, Gerard Butler and Billy Connolly star in *Ladyhawke* director Richard Donner's adventure yarn about three Yale students who must travel back in time to 14th-century France to rescue a trapped history professor and return him to the present. Based on the novel by Michael Crichton.

## LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468  
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285  
FP: Famous Players  
GA: Gameau Theatre, 433-0728  
L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728  
M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212  
P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728

**GARNEAU theatre**  
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

**Elephant**  
Nightly 7:00 & 9:00 pm  
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm  
\*14A\* (violence, disturbing content)

**PRINCESS THEATRE**  
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

**MY LIFE WITHOUT ME**  
Nightly 7:15 & 9:15 pm  
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:30 pm  
\*14A\*

**PRINCESS THEATRE**  
10337 - Whyte Ave. - 433-0728

**L'Auberge Espagnole**  
Nightly 7:00 & 9:30 pm  
Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00 pm  
\*14A\* (sexual content)

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# FILM LISTINGS

Shorttimes for Friday, December 12 to Thursday, December 18

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

**GARNEAU**  
1171-1181 St. John St.

**PHILIP**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**PRINCESS**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**AMBERG ESPAGNOLE**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**MY LIFE WITHOUT ME**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**METRO CINEMA**  
9628-101A Ave.

**BUFFALO SOLDIERS**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**GRANDIN THEATRE**  
Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave.

**THE SHOWTIMES LISTED ARE FOR THE DATE OF THIS ISSUE, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11 ONLY. PLEASE CONTACT THEATRE FOR CONFIRMATION.**

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**THE MISSING**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**LEDCUS CINEMAS**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**THE MISSING**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**BROTHER BEAR**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**GOTHIKA**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**WETASKIWIN CINEMAS**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**THE MISSING**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
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**STUCK ON YOU**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**BROTHER BEAR**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**  
Violence, frightening scenes. No poster.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. No poster.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content.

**WEST MALL 8**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**INTOLERABLE CRUELTY**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 9:40.

**MYSTIC RIVER**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 6:30-9:20.

**THE SCHOOL OF ROCK**  
Fr Mon-Thu 7:10 Sat-Sun 4:30-7:10.

**LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION**  
Fr Mon-Thu 6:50 Sat-Sun 2:20-4:40-6:50.

**SCARY MOVIE 3**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**KILL BILL: VOLUME 1**  
Gory violence. Daily 8:55.

**UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN**  
Not suitable for younger children. Fr Mon-Thu 6:45-9:10.

**RADIO**  
Fr Mon-Thu 6:40-9:15 Sat-Sun 1:50-4:15-6:40-9:15.

**TUPAC: RESURRECTION**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 6:35-9:00.

**SUMMER**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 7:00-9:30.

**CLAREVIEW**  
4211-139 Ave. 472-7500.

**BAD SANTA**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
Daily 12:40-2:50-5:00-7:10-9:20.

**ELF**  
Daily 12:10-2:20-4:40-7:00-9:10.

**GOTHIKA**  
Violence, disturbing content. Fr-Tue 12:00-3:10-7:50.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr-Tue 12:30-2:40-5:10-7:30-9:30.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 10:05.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Daily 12:20-3:30-6:40-10:00.

**HONEY**  
Daily 1:50-4:10-6:30-8:50.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**  
Violence, frightening scenes. No poster.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. No poster.

**BLIZZARD**  
Daily 1:00-3:20-7:40.

**THE SNOW WALKER**  
Some coarse language. Daily 12:50.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content.

**SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**BAD SANTA**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
Daily 12:10-2:20-4:40.

**GOTHIKA**  
Violence, disturbing content. Fr-Tue 7:40-10:25.

**ELF**  
Daily 1:00-3:30-6:45-9:20.

**WINTER AND COMMANDER: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD**  
Violence. Fr-Tue 3:20-6:40-9:40.

**LOVE ACTUALLY**  
Sexual content. Daily 12:50-3:45-6:50-9:50.

**THE SNOW WALKER**  
Fr Mon-Thu 2:20-4:40-6:30-7:15-8:50-9:30.

**WINTER AND COMMANDER: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Wed-Thu 12:15-3:40-7:00-10:15.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 7:00-10:00 Tue 7:00.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr-Sun 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**HONEY**  
Daily 1:50-4:10-6:30-8:50.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content. Fr Mon-Thu 3:20-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**  
Violence, frightening scenes. No poster.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. No poster.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr-Tue 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:30-9:30.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr-Tue 9:30.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**WEST MALL 6**  
6882-170 St. 444-1331.

**ONCE UPON A TIME IN MEXICO**  
Graphic violence. Fr Mon-Thu 7:30-9:50.

**FREAKY FRIDAY**  
Fr Mon-Thu 7:00-9:15 Sat-Sun 4:00-7:00-9:15.

**AMERICAN WEDDING**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**THE CURSE OF THE BLACK PEARL**  
Frightening scenes. Not suitable for young children.

**SEABISCUIT**  
Some coarse language. Daily 9:00.

**THE RUNDOWN**  
Fr Mon-Thu 7:15-9:40 Sat-Sun 4:15-7:15-9:40.

**SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER**  
Fr Mon-Thu 6:50-9:50 Sat-Sun 4:30-6:30-9:30.

**GALAXY CINEMAS @ SHERWOOD PARK**  
2020 Sherwood Drive, 416-0150.

**BAD SANTA**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**GOTHIKA**  
Violence, disturbing content. Fr-Sun 3:00-7:10.

**BROTHER BEAR**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:35-2:35-4:35-6:35-8:35-10:35.

**ELF**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:35-2:35-4:35-6:35-8:35-10:35.

**MAINTENANCE MAN: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD**  
Violence. Fr-Tue 9:55.

**LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION**  
Sat-Sun 12:15.

**TIMELINE**  
Violence. Fr-Tue 10:00.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 12:30-2:30-4:30-6:30-8:30-10:30.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 7:10-9:30.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content. Fr Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:30-12:30.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:30-12:30.

**BLIZZARD**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:30-2:30-4:30-6:30-8:30-10:30.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**  
Violence, frightening scenes. No poster.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 12:30-2:30-4:30-6:30-8:30-10:30.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 7:10-9:30.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content. Fr Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:30-12:30.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:30-12:30.

**BLIZZARD**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:30-2:30-4:30-6:30-8:30-10:30.

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**BLIZZARD**  
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**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 12:30-2:30-4:30-6:30-8:30-10:30.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 7:10-9:30.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content. Fr Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:30-12:30.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:30-12:30.

**GOTHIKA**  
Violence, disturbing content. Fr-Tue 7:30-9:50.

**BROTHER BEAR**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:35-2:35-4:35-6:35-8:35-10:35.

**ELF**  
Daily 1:00-3:30-6:45-9:20.

**MAINTENANCE MAN: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD**  
Violence. Fr-Tue 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:50.

**LOVE ACTUALLY**  
Sexual content. Fr Mon-Thu 12:40-3:40-6:40-9:40.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr-Tue 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:30-9:30.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr-Tue 9:30.

**TIMELINE**  
Violence. Fr Mon-Thu 12:00.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**HONEY**  
Daily 1:50-4:10-6:30-8:50.

**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE**  
Coarse language, sexual content. Fr Mon-Thu 3:20-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**BLIZZARD**  
Daily 12:10-2:40-5:10-7:30-9:30.

**LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING**  
Violence, frightening scenes. No poster.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory scenes. Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**LOVE DON'T COST A THING**  
Daily 2:00-4:15-7:40-10:05.

**STUCK ON YOU**  
Coarse language. No poster.

**FAMOUS PLAYERS**  
28 Ave. Calgary Trail, 436-6977.

**GATEWAY 8**  
28 Ave. Calgary Trail, 436-6977.

**THE SCHOOL OF ROCK**  
Fr Mon-Thu 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**MYSTIC RIVER**  
Coarse language. Fr Mon-Thu 6:30-9:20.

**SCARY MOVIE 3**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr Sat-Sun 12:45-2:40-4:45-6:45-8:45-10:45.

**TIMELINE**  
Violence. Fr Sat-Sun 1:10-4:05-7:10-9:55.

**LOVE DON'T COST A THING**  
Daily 2:00-4:15-7:40-10:05.

**THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS**  
Violence. Fr Sat-Sun 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45-12:45.

**BLIZZARD**  
Fr Sat-Sun 1:20-4:00-7:00-9:40.

**SILVERCITY WEST EDMONTON MALL**  
1000-1001 St. John St.

**DR. SEUSS' THE CAT IN THE HAT**  
Fr Sat-Sun 12:45-3:10-5:45-8:10-10:50.

**THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS**  
Violence. Fr Sat-Sun 12:45-3:45-6:45-9:45-12:45.

**LOVE ACTUALLY**  
Sexual content. Fr Sat-Sun 12:50-3:50-6:50-9:50-12:50.

**ELF**  
Fr Sat-Sun 12:10-2:20-4:40-7:00-9:20.

**GOTHIKA**  
Violence, disturbing content. Fr Sat-Sun 1:20-4:30-7:50-10:40.

**THE HAUNTED MANSION**  
Frightening scenes. Fr Sat-Sun 12:30-2:45-5:00-7:25-9:45.

**THE MISSING**  
Violence. Fr Sat-Sun 12:35-3:50-7:05-10:05.

**BAD SANTA**  
Crude sexual content throughout, not recommended for children.

**THE LAST SAMURAI**  
Gory



## New guy at the gallery

If anyone can revive the public's interest in the EAG, it's Tony Luppino

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

"What do you call a boomerang that never returns? A stick. What do you call a gallery that nobody visits? A building." —Tony Luppino

When my editor asked me to represent *Vue Weekly* at a function at the Edmonton Art Gallery to meet its new executive director Tony Luppino, I silently groaned. It's not that I'm not as curious as everyone else to learn about this important newcomer to our community, but formal affairs full of cookie-cutter speeches don't often inspire me. All I had to look forward to, I figured, was a soporific morning in an auditorium unrelieved even by the perk of free coffee.

Luppino's speech started innocuously enough: he said something about how renowned the gallery is, how innovative the programming, how committed its staff.... Then, just as I was about to doze off, his emotional tone startled me out of my reverie. "I want the dialogue between us to be honest," Luppino said, addressing the media with sincerity. "I want it to be a dialogue, not a monologue. Not only do I hope that you will help us to promote the gallery, but you have access to the community in a way that we don't, and I hope that you will bring us back this information so that we can be better and more responsive." These did not sound like stage-prop

platitudes. "Criticism is the greatest gift of learning that anyone can give," he reiterated later. "Lack of criticism breeds a lack of caring."

What sort of a man is this new director who seeks not accolades but genuine feedback from the community? As we sat talking in the evening in his quiet office, Luppino's vivacious personality began to reveal itself. "I have been interested in art since a young age," says Luppino, who was born in New Jersey to a

### PROFILE VISUAL ARTS

working-class Italian-American family. With contemporary galleries right at the back door, his earliest exposure to art was the abstract work of Jackson Pollock. "I never thought that you were supposed to understand art," Luppino exclaims. "That's why I was never intimidated by it."

Luppino decided to become an artist just like the pop-art icons he saw in galleries. He began casting eggs into plaster and gluing them onto canvases. With the naive exuberance of youth, he sent his slides to the galleries that make all other artists tremble. "I went right for Leo Castelli," he laughs. To his utter amazement, all the galleries took his slides and wrote comments. "Well, that is great, this art world," he thought as he opened the envelopes. But it was not entirely what he was hoping to hear. "They were so honest," says Luppino cheerfully. "I decided that I should not be an artist."

HE WENT ON to graduate with a bachelor of science in journalism from Boston University and landed an advertising job in Rome with Saatchi and Saatchi. In Italy, Luppino witnessed an attitude to art that left a

lifelong impression: art was not a world unto itself, but one woven inextricably into the fabric of society, combining disciplines like architecture, design and even politics. His love of art also led Luppino to a real-life romance—he met his future wife at an Andy Warhol movie. One of the couple's favourite holiday activities became going on archaeological digs. This pastime soon developed into a passion. After moving to Toronto he continued to work in advertising while taking evening courses in archaeology, an effort that culminated in a master's degree and a summer job teaching in the field. Then Luppino heard that 25 acres of land were to be developed right over an ancient native settlement. He bought the land, and, with his wife, son and a team of students, conducted an archaeological dig, donating all the finds to a museum.

As if these interests weren't enough already for a couple of lifetimes, Luppino volunteered on the boards of arts organizations, advised cash-strapped arts groups on marketing strategies and wrote art reviews for the *Globe and Mail*. His interest in Eastern art was ignited by an incident during a trip to Nepal. Following an exhausting trek, Luppino returned to the city without enough money for a hotel. A hotel-keeper (a Tibetan refugee) not only took him in, but also refused to let Luppino send away for cash. "Just send me the money when you get to Canada," he told him. That was the start of Luppino's lifelong friendship with the man, which led to an interest in Buddhism and a job writing for *Arts of Asia*.

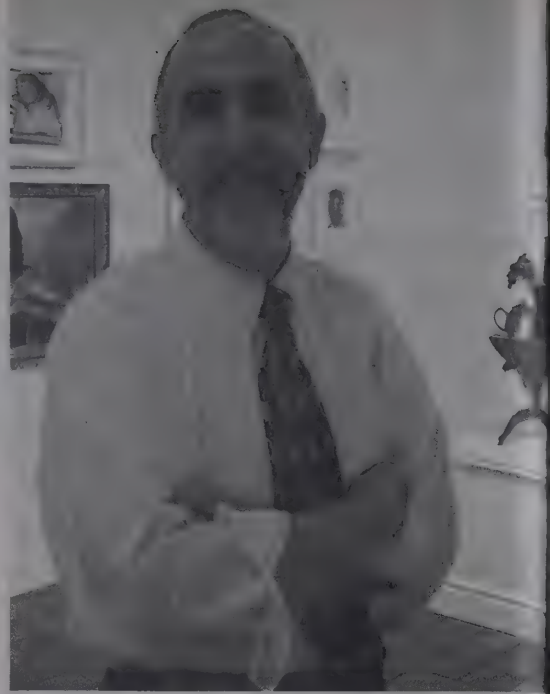
At this point Luppino began to wonder if he should not perhaps get some official art credentials. "I had been doing all of these things," Luppino

says, "but I had no official status. I wondered if what I had been saying was true, or if anybody qualified agreed with me, so I did a master's degree in art history." He received that degree the same week as he officially started his job with the Edmonton Art Gallery on November 17.

WITH A WEALTH of experience worthy of any Renaissance man, Luppino may well succeed in his goal to wipe out the pockets of apathy that exist towards the visual arts in Edmonton. "If I have a mission, it is to tell people that they should just experience art," he says. "For some

reason, our education system, or society, tells people that art is worse than that it's like being in school. There's a discomfort. We have to overcome that. If we don't, they [the viewers] don't fail. We fail to do our job."

To Luppino the public is not made up of ignorant masses. It wants to hear from us. And I think his *glasnost*-like attitude towards community input will go a long way to help him achieve his goal. "This is an opportunity of a lifetime," Luppino says emotionally. "I care so much about art. It made my life wonderful. I want to be able to share that." ♦



## CONSTRUCTING POSSIBILITIES

An Exhibition and Sale of Art by William G. Prettie

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Edmonton, Alberta  
December 12 to 24, 2003



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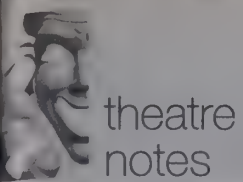
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By PAUL MATWYCHUK

# crooged again

**Christmas Carol • MacLach Theatre, The Citadel • To Dec 24 (7:30pm curtain) • reVUE** After seeing the Citadel's production of *A Christmas Carol* for the fourth time in as many years, thinking of new things to say about it becomes an increasingly challenging task. If my memory can be trusted, I think playwright/star Tom Wood has made a few changes to his script, but these small, cosmetic touches aside, the production has the same expert blend of showmanship and heart that made it an immediate hit when it debuted back in 2000. You can still hear the audience thrill to the moment at the top of Act Two when two mournful stained glass windows slide onstage, transforming the MacLach stage into a London church while the entire cast sings "O, Come All Ye Faithful," or the sight of the gigantic, spectral figure of the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come emerging silently and imperceptibly from the darkness and looming menacingly over the stage. And Wood still delivers the goods as Ebenezer Scrooge—he makes Scrooge's hatred of Christmas seem like much more than a character quirk, but a deep, tragic psychic scar.

Wood is, I believe, one of our four principal actors to have done the show for four years. (Alison Wells, Kevin Corey and Julian Arnold, whose wonderfully moving turn as Bob Cratchit is one of this production's consistent strengths, are the others.) Among the newcomers, I was especially impressed by the way Jan Alexandra Smith makes Mrs. Cratchit into such a compelling figure. She brings a startling amount of anger to the early scene where she rails against Scrooge's callous treatment of her husband that suggests this woman's pride, the desperation she feels at her youngest child's declining health and even a little dash of impatience at her husband's inability to stand up for himself.

After three viewings of the play, I knew when all the big special effects would take place and it was fun to see the simple but very clever bits of misdirection Wood and director Bob Baker employ to distract the audience while they're being set up. I'm still not sure how Wood wriggles out of his pants and back into his nightgown so quickly at the end of the Ghost of Christmas Past sequence, though. If *A Christmas Carol* returns for a fifth year, I will have to make sure to watch that transition a lot more closely.

## Not found wanting

**Gimmel Gimmel • Varscona Theatre • Dec 11-13, 18-20 • reVUE** Jeff Haslam and Celina Stachow describe *Gimmel Gimmel* as a sort of musical tribute to the 75 minutes of songs about wanting, craving and desperate yearning—but

in fact it's as generous-hearted a show as you could ask for. The two actor/singers genuinely seem to enjoy listening to each other perform and watching them introduce their next number, and they eagerly hand over the stage to a different guest star every night. (The night I saw the show, it was Briana Buckmaster in the spotlight, singing "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "Perfectly Alone," Carol Burnett's 11 o'clock song from the 1994 musical *Lunch*. "She's going to be a star," Haslam said after Buckmaster made her exit. "She's probably backstage becoming a star right now.") In the wrong hands, this kind of you're-great-or-you're-great cabaret banter can get pretty cloying, but Haslam and Stachow are so loose and spontaneous that they never sound like phonies.

They don't adhere too closely to the "wanting/needin'" theme that's supposedly the backbone of the show, but who cares when the material is this delightful? One of the nicest discoveries of the show for me was Stachow's sparkling rendition of David Friedman's hilarious "Rich, Famous and Powerful"; I think she speaks for all of us when she proclaims, "I don't want to work, struggle or compromise/When I set a goal I want to reach it right away/Cause paying your dues is just for other gals/As for me, I want what I want and I want it right away." And Haslam does a lovely medley of "Look for the Silver Lining" and "Tomorrow"—he sings the latter song in a wistful, low-key way that rescues it from all its associations with obnoxious, leather-lunged child performers and exposes the downbeat message at its core. ("I love you, tomorrow," goes the final line, "you're always a day away"—and Haslam delivers it like a man who always expects happiness to remain always just out of his reach.)

*Gimmel Gimmel* doesn't pretend to be anything more than a modest night's entertainment, but if you're a fan of old-fashioned songwriting (and singing), this show about wanting things will give you exactly what you need.

## Drag and circuses

Mark Meer is already one of Edmonton's busiest improvisers, but his schedule will be even more crowded over the next couple of weeks. On Sunday, December 14 at 9 p.m., he helps launch the city's latest comedy enterprise, **The Colossal Improv Comedy Circus**, at Fargo's on Whyte Avenue. And Meer, Kevin Gillesse and Donovan Workun will be facing off against guest improv troupes every Sunday night thereafter for two 45-minute sets of unscripted comedy, accompanied by the music of Stew Kirkwood.

Meer bills himself as the mentalist of the Comedy Circus (Workun is the strong man and Gillesse is the "boy-faced dog"), but on Saturday, December 20 he assumes his usual guise as the bearded lady, or at least the lady with well-hidden five-o'clock shadow, for the **Oh Susanna Christmas Special**, which happens at 11 p.m. at the Varscona Theatre. Meer's alter ego, Euro-TV diva Susanna Patchouli, will preside over the usual blend of comedy, music and cutthroat celebrity competition, only this time with a Yuletide twist. As if Susanna Patchouli needed an excuse to fill the stage with tinsel. ●

# ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to [lists@vue.ab.ca](mailto:lists@vue.ab.ca). Deadline is Friday at 3pm

## DANCE

**THE NUTCRACKER** Jubilee Auditorium, 11455-87 Ave (428-6839/451-8000) • Featuring Alberta Ballet, Ballet British Columbia and local dance students. Choreography by Mikko Nissinen. Music by Pyotr I. Tchaikovsky. Dec. 11-14 • Dec. 11-13 (7:30pm); Dec. 13-14 (2pm) • Tickets available at TicketMaster

**"T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS** Varsity Ridge Academy large gym, 8205-90 Ave (413-9085, 440-2100) • Featuring dancers from the Edmonton Festival Ballet, Edmonton Contemporary Dancers and students from the Edmonton School of Ballet. Fr. Dec. 12 (1:30pm; Sat. Dec. 13 (2pm and 7:30pm)) • \$5/children 3 and under free

## GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

**ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**ARTIST STUDIO SHOW** 10347-80 Ave • CONSTRUCTING POSSIBILITIES: Artworks by William G. Prettie • Dec. 12-24 (noon-5pm)

**ARTSPACE STUDIO GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**CENTRE D'ART VIEUX DE L'ALBERTA** 9103-95 Ave (461-3427) • **LIFE IN MOTION**: Paintings by Claude Thériault, Jacques Martel and Clint Buehler, mixed media works by Laura Watmough; sewing by Françoise Fiset, until Dec. 17 • Group show featuring artworks by members of the Centre, Dec. 17-February

**CHIEFT'S BLACKSTONE RED GALLERY** 82 Ave (439-8210) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • **ON BEING DIDACTIC (BUT NOT NECESSARILY PEDANTIC)**: Paintings by Christi Bergstrom, until January • **A VIEW TO UNDERSTANDING**: Portraits by Christi Bergstrom, until December

**DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY** 10303-124 St (488-4445) • **CHRISTMAS SHOW**: Including artwork by Joe Falar and Dempsey Bob, Dec. 13

**EDMONTON ART GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO** 12419 Story, Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-4pm • **2003 RETROSPECTIVE SHOW**: Landscapes by Myrna Harris, Jeff Collins, ceramics by Darwin Dolinsky, John Elder, Christian Barr, Paintings by James Trevelyan, glassworks by James Lavioie; wash; china by Terry O'Connor, gold and silver jewellery by Wayne Mackenzie, Janet Stein, John Blair, Peter McKay, wood boxes by John Morel, Henry Schlosser, Doug Haslam • Until Dec. 23

**EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**FINE ARTS BUILDING GALLERY** Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St, 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 2pm-5pm • **GO A PROGRESS**: Paintings by Cynthia Gardiner, until Dec. 20, opening reception: Fri, Dec. 12 (7-10pm) • **STUDENT WORK**: Paintings by Duncan Johnson, until Dec. 20, opening reception: Fri, Dec. 12 (7-10pm)

**FORT DOOR** 10308-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings (knukshuk, bears) by J. Papagaitok, West Coast Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by J. Sawyer • Until Dec. 30

**FRINGE GALLERY** Bsm 10516 Whyte Ave (432-2040) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm • **PORTRAITS FROM CLASSIC TO CONTEMPORARY**: Artworks by Pearl Schreiner, Dawn McLean, Christine Wallewein, Mary Wight, Sidsel Naess Bradley, Neil Fiertel, Richard Tosczak • Until Dec. 31

**GALLERY DE JONGE** 27022A Hwy 16A, Spruce Grove (962-9505) • Open Tue-Fri 11am-5pm, anytime by appointment • Work by local artists Beth Coult, Earl Cummings, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

**GIORDANO GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**HARCOURT HOUSE** 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 12-5pm • **SOUTH OF SIXTY**: Artworks by artists from the Yukon. Curated by the Yukon Arts Centre's Scott Marsden • Until Dec. 20

**JEFF ALLEN GALLERY** Strathcona Place, 10831 University Ave (433-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • **CHRISTMAS SHOW AND SALE**: Group show • Until Jan. 29 • Viewing: Wed, Dec. 17 (6-8:30pm)

**JOHNSON GALLERY** 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm, Sat am-5pm • **CHRISTMAS ART FAIR**: Artworks by over 60 artists, until Dec. 24

**JOHNSON GALLERY** 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • **CHRISTMAS ART FAIR**: Artworks by Gallery artists • Until Dec. 24

**LATITUDE 53** See What's Happening Downtown

**McMULLEN GALLERY** U of A Hospital, East Entrance, 8440-112 St (407-7152) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-8pm, Sat-Sun 1-8pm • **THE BED** VHO Handcrafted beds and furniture created by Susan Owen-Kagan and Ken MacLinn. In support of the Artists on the Wards program • Until Jan. 18

**MOORE MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 5411-51 St, Stone Park (985-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • **SKY FORMS, SEA AND PRAIRIE**: Artworks by Dave Moore, until Jan. 5

**MUSEE HERITAGE MUSEUM** 5 St, Annier Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • **SITTING PRETTY—LA FETE DES TOILETTES** • Until Feb. 2

**NORVA GALLERY CENTRE FOR THE ARTS** 9702-111 Ave (488-0255) • **DECK THE WALLS**: Artworks by adults with developmental disabilities

**PITS GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**SCHMELMUTZ PUBLIC ART GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**STREET ART** 10am-8pm • **PRESENCE IX**: Show and fundraiser, sale of functional and decorative artworks, until Dec. 24 • Art Ventures: Twinkle, Twinkle, kids program; Sat, Dec. 20 (1-4pm); \$2/child

**SYNCRUDE MUSEUM OF ALBERTA** 102 Ave (453-9100) • Open Sat-Tue 9am-5pm, Fr 9am-9pm • **TEDDY BEARS ARE BACK**, until Feb. 16 • **FORGED IN FIRE**, 19TH CENTURY FIREARMS IN ALBERTA, until Jan. 11 • **BIG THINGS 2**: Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; until Apr. 30, 2004 • **THE ROOKIE**: Photographs of Wayne Gretzky; until Jan. 14 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABO**

**RIGNAL PEOPLES GALLERY** Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, BIG THINGS 2. Featuring Permanent exhibit • **THE NATURAL HISTORY GALLERY** • **BUG ROOM**: Live invertebrate display

Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY**: Mounted birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH**: Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY**: Permanent exhibit • **A TO Z AT THE MUSEUM**: Every Sat (9am-11am) family-fun drop-in program

**RED STRAP MARKET** See What's Happening Downtown

**REMEDY** 8631-109 St • **THINGS ON WALLS**: Paintings by Christine Schultz, photographs by Vanessa Yaremchuk • Until Dec. 31

**RIVULET AND COMPANY** See What's Happening Downtown

**SCOTT GALLERY** 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **CHRISTMAS TREASURES** • New artworks by Lynn Mallin, Phyllis Anderson, Jim Stokes, David Moore, Angelique Gillespie and others • Until December

**SEGRE'S STUDIO GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**SNAP GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

**SNOWBIRD GALLERY** WEM, 8882-170 St (404-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Gregg Johnson, acrylics by Jim West, pottery by Noburo Kube and Jacqueline Stenberg

**STREETART ART GALLERY AND STUDIO** 11745 Jasper Ave (482-6677) • Open daily 10am-5pm • Paintings by Christopher Lucas, Patricia Young, Bridgit Turner, Deanna Lucas and David Phillips

**VAAA GALLERY** 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) • **SPUN**: Artworks made from handspun fibre by hand weavers, spinners and dyers of Alberta • Until Dec. 20

**WEST END GALLERY** 12308 Jasper Ave (488-4892) • Still life acrylic paintings by Nuse Barton and Grant Lee, until Dec. 10 • **SHORTBREAD AND SHERRY**: Christmas exhibition, group show, Dec. 11-23

**WORKS GALLERY** See What's Happening Downtown

## LITERARY

**CHAPTERS** 445 St. Albert Rd, St. Albert • Zhanna Alexander reads from her new novel *Lower is an Octopus* • Sat, Dec. 13 (2pm)

**STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY THEATRE** See What's Happening Downtown

**UNIVERSITY OF EXTENSION** Rm 2-36, 8303-112 St (436-9002) • Celebration and launch of *Other Voices* Journal of the Literary and Visual Arts, the 15th year of publication • Free

## LIVE COMEDY

**BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL** 32 St. Anne St, St. Albert • Every Sun (8pm) Sunday Night Funnies with spiritual detective, Barbara May and guest

**THE COMEDY FACTORY 34th Gateway** • Boulevard (469-4999) • Brian Work, Dec. 11-13 • Bob Bedford, Dec. 18-20 • Rob Pae, Dec. 26-27

**FARGO'S** 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) • Fargo's Laugh-a-Lot Comedy • Every Sun

**RED'S WEM** (481-6420) • Hypno Sundays. Sebastian Steel; Sun, Dec. 14 • Hypno Sundays Teance B; Sun, Dec. 21

## THEATRE

**CHIMPVOI! The New Varscona Theatre**, 10329-83 Ave (48-0695) • Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers • Every Sat (11pm) except last Sat of each month

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL** See What's Happening Downtown

**THE CHRISTMAS CAROL PROJECT** The Roxy, 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Presented by Brass Monkey Productions and TheatrePublic • Kenneth Brown, Bill Bourne, Tom Roschok, Terry Morrison and Maria Dunn star in the 8th edition of *TheatrePublic's* musical adaptation of Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, featuring music and songs by some of Edmonton's favourite roots musicians • Dec. 17-21 (8pm), Sat, Dec. 20 (2pm) • \$20 (adv/\$25 (door), children under 12 free) • Sat Sat/14matinee when accompanied by an adult • Tickets available at Theatre Network box office

**DANCING WITH JAZZ** See What's Happening Downtown

**DIE-NASTY** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave • Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Meier, Josh Dean, David Stewart and Leona Branson celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirk and Grace Metalious • Every Monday (8pm)

**GILLIAN'S ISLAND** Jubilations Dinner Theatre, WEM (484-2424) • A 10th-anniversary revival of this parody of the '60s TV series *Gilligan's Island*, about a crew of hapless sailors and their mismatched passengers who are washed ashore on a deserted island and endure a violent storm • Until Jan. 25 • Tickets available by phone

**GIMMEL GIMMEL** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (48-399) • Dec. 23 • Jeff Haslam and Celina Stachow are joined by pianist Steven Greenfield and an ever-changing series of special guest stars for an evening of classic songs on the subject of wishing, needing, craving and pleading • Dec. 11-13, 18-20, Thu-Sat (9pm) • Pay-What-You-Can

**INITIAL BURNER AND THE RETURN OF THE MUT** SCHMELMUTZ Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Oasis Entertainment Hotel, 11303 Fort Rd (488-9319) • Dandelion archaeologist Indiana Bones must save the day yet again when his archival Helmut Schmelmütz reappears on the scene, once again bent on world destruction in this musical spoof of the  *Raiders of the Lost Ark*  series of adventure films • Until Jan. 31 (Sat 6-15pm, Sun 5-15pm) • \$43.95 (Wed, Thu, Sun)/\$49.95 (Fri, Sat)/\$20 (child 12 and under)/free (child under 2)

**JACK AND THE BEANSTALK** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (420-1757) • Presented by Alberta Opera • Farnen Timothee, Amber Bissonnette and Andrew MacDonald-Smith star in *Gamer Butler* and Jeff Unger's fanciful musical adaptation of the fairytale about a boy, a cow, a giant and a handful of magic beans • Until Dec. 14, Thu-Sun (7pm, Sat-Sun (2pm)) • \$8 (child 12 and under)/\$10 (student/senior)/\$15 (adult) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

**JAMES AND THE GIANT PEA** See What's Happening Downtown

**THE MUSIC MAN** Eva O. Howard Theatre, 101 St. Kingsway Ave (426-3010) • Presented by the students at Victoria School • A student production of Meredith Wilson's beloved musical about a fast-talking con-man who convinces the citizens of turn-of-the-century River City to invest in his scheme to form a marching band at the local school • Dec. 11-13 (7pm) • \$10 (adult)/\$6 (child/senior) • Tickets available at Victoria School office

**OH SUSANNA!** The Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, [www.varsconatheatre.com/ohsusanna](http://www.varsconatheatre.com/ohsusanna) • A special Christmas edition of Edmonton's live Euro-style talk show, in which international glamour gal Susanna Patchouli presides over an evening of comedy, games and celebrity interviews aided by her co-host, Eros, God of Love • Sat, Dec. 20 (11pm)

**OLIVER!** Festival Place, 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park (449-3378) • Presented by The Festival Players • Lionel Bart's rocking musical adaptation of Charles Dickens's novel *Oliver Twist*, about the adventures of a young orphan boy who falls in with a pack of youthful thieves on his way to fulfilling his life's destiny • Sat, Dec. 20 (sold out), Dec. 21-Tue, Dec. 23, Sat, Dec. 27, Mon, Dec. 29-Tue, Dec. 30 (7:30pm), \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student); Fri, Dec. 26 (2pm), \$15 (everyone), Sun, Dec. 27 (7:30pm), \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student)/\$39.50 (adult, dinner/show)/\$34.50 (student, dinner/show)



# free will astrology

By ROB BREZSNY

## ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 19

Six miles from Maui is a Hawaiian island that tourists never visit—Kahoolawe. The U.S. Navy seized it in 1941 and used it as a target range for decades. After years of protests by native Hawaiians, the Navy finally stopped bombing and began a clean-up campaign. Last month it formally turned control of the island over to its rightful owners. "You can get a feel on Kahoolawe of what it was like to live on Hawaii at the time of our ancestors," says native Hawaiian Davianna McGregor. "We can practice our traditions there without it being a tourist attraction. It's one place we can go to be in communion with our natural life forces." Every one of us has a personal version of Kahoolawe, Aries: a part of our psyche that has been stolen or colonized by hostile forces. It's a perfect moment for you to take back yours.

## TAURUS

Apr 20 - May 20

Three billion years ago, the Earth's original single-cell organisms thrived in a carbon dioxide-rich atmosphere. As a byproduct of their metabolism, however, they released an abundant amount of oxygen. It was a pollutant that ultimately made their environment uninhabitable for them, though it prepared the way for the oxygen-breathers that now

dominate the planet. Now let's meditate on how this might be a useful metaphor for you, Taurus. Is there any "pollutant" produced by the person you were in the past that could be valuable for the person you will become in the future?

## GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

Vanessa Lucero, a 14-year-old New Mexico girl, is your role model this week. In October, she was named homecoming princess at her high school. On the weekend of her reign, she also played in a game for the football team, becoming the first female in school history to score a touchdown. During the span of a few glorious hours, she wore both a helmet and a tiara. Like Vanessa, you Gemini now have the potential to notch triumphs in two separate spheres using different sets of skills.

## CANCER

June 21 - July 22

The world's most famous Cancer, U.S. President George W. Bush, has described his relationship with newspapers this way: "I glance at the headlines just to kind of get a flavour for what's moving. I rarely read the stories, and get briefed by people who read the news themselves." Please don't imitate Bush's approach as you gather information in the coming days, my fellow Crabs. It's crucial that you never rely on third-hand reports as you penetrate to the root of every unfolding plot. You know how journalists sometimes bury really interesting and mysterious details at the end of their stories? That's what life will do.

## LEO

July 23 - Aug 22

After a study found that a majority of heterosexual men dive into sexual intercourse without any warm-up, Britain launched its first annual National Foreplay Day last July. How

about if we borrow this holiday for your use, Leo? I'm not saying you've been remiss in your approach to maximizing erotic pleasure, but there's always room for improvement. Besides, from an astrological perspective, this is a favourable time to expand your mastery of the arts of love. In fact, let's borrow another British holiday, National Orgasm Day. I hereby proclaim this Universal Foreplay and Orgasm Week for all Leos.

## VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sept 22

This week's horoscope features the poetry of U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Delivered at a news briefing, it provides a perfect frame for the current state of your fate. "As we know," he said, "there are known unknowns. There are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns. That is to say, we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know." You, Virgo, are very close to discovering at least two of your personal unknown unknowns.

## LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22

My Libran friend John was constantly harassed and shamed by his father over trivial issues when he was growing up. A typical scenario often occurred in the kitchen as John scanned the refrigerator for an appetizing snack. "You idiot!" his dad would scream at him. "How many millions of times have I told you not to hold the refrigerator door open so long?" John would immediately close the door and leave in silence, feeling humiliated and hungry. When he told me this story today, here's what I advised him to do: keep his refrigerator door open for as long as it takes to wipe away the pain of his father's inane cruelty. To the rest of you Libras I say: rebel in a way that will heal a wound from childhood.

## SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21

Like every species, harmful microbes evolve over time in response to environmental conditions. Syphilis, for example, was far more lethal and fast-spreading 500 years ago. It killed its human victims relatively quickly, which diminished its ability to proliferate in new hosts. Ultimately, a milder variety developed to ensure the survival of the species. An infected person lived longer and could spread the syphilis strain further. I propose that you adopt this model as a metaphor for dealing with your bad moods, aberrant behaviour and temporary attacks of insanity. Cultivate your relationship with the milder forms of these pathologies, confident that this will make the nastier versions obsolete.

## SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21

I saw the Acura commercial on TV tonight. The car was driving through a remote high desert. Through the magic of computer graphics, it seemed to be creating the road as it moved, laying down paved blacktop where before there was only dirt. I thought of you immediately, Sagittarius. You're in a comparable situation, right? There's no path where you're going, so you'll have to make it for yourself as you proceed.

## CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 19

Capricorn actress Drea de Matteo's career is in full bloom. Besides her regular role on *The Sopranos*, she's been in nine movies since 2001. To what should we attribute her success? Lots of talent, for one. A playwright mother who exposed her to the theatre early, for two. During her recent appearance on Carson Daly's *Last Call* TV show, she revealed a ballsy magic that constitutes a third ingredient. She told Daly she keeps the testicles of her Great Dane, which she had

neutered a few years ago, in a jar of formaldehyde by her bed. Take inspiration from her example, Capricorn. It's high time you acknowledged the fact that skill and hard work may not be enough to get you where you want to go; you also need mojo.

## AQUARIUS

Jan 20 - Feb 18

"So many of us are not in our bodies, really at home and vibrantly present there," said dancer Gabrielle Roth. "Nor are we in touch with the basic rhythms that constitute our bodily life. We live outside ourselves—in our heads, our memories, our longings—absent from the land of our own estate." Does any of this description fit you, Aquarius? If so, here's good news: the months ahead will provide you with the best opportunity ever to come home to your body, to inhabit it with robust awareness and gratitude. And it all starts now. To show you're ready, find a place to be alone in the dark, put on music that moves you and dance yourself all the way back into your body.

## PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

Each week I give my readers homework. My recent assignment was to finish the sentence, "The one thing that keeps me from being myself is \_\_\_\_\_." Many respondents filled in the blank with "my fears." Other common answers were "lack of money," "my spouse" and "my obsession with everyone's images of me." But the best contribution was from Ann-Marie at [www.getunderground.com](http://www.getunderground.com). She said, "The one thing that keeps me from being myself is people's reluctance to lick patient leather." By not taking herself too seriously, she showed that *nothing* can keep her from being herself. Drawing inspiration from her sterling example, Pisces, finish this sentence in a more humorous way than you normally might: "The one thing that keeps me from being myself is \_\_\_\_\_." ●

THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN

# DOWNTOWN

BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

[www.edmontondowntown.com](http://www.edmontondowntown.com)

## GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

**REBECCA CROFT GALLERY** 1000-1001  
1488-6111/1488-5900 • Open Mon-Sat, 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-8pm (closed all holidays) • **MAIN GALLERY: HOLIDAY CELEBRATION OF CRAFT** Mixed media crafts • until Dec. 24 • **DISCOVERY GALLERY: HOLIDAY CELEBRATION OF CRAFT** until Dec. 24

**ARTISTS STUDIO GALLERY** 250-1001  
Building, 10217 106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pederson, Tim Redner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende, Greg Swain, Anna Szul, Eugene Uhuad and guests

**EDMONTON ART GALLERY** 250-1001  
106 St (423-2966) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 11am-5pm, Sun 12pm-5pm • **THE WINTER ART AUCTION AND FUNDRAISER** Fri, Dec. 12 (7-11pm) • **THE ART SHOW** Presented by Human Youth Society; Sat, Dec. 13 (2-8pm), Sun, Dec. 14 (noon-4pm)

**RED STRAP ART MARKET** 10305-97 St (497-2211) • **OPENING PARTY** for all local artists and artisans. Opening with live jazz and cocktails • Dec. 18 (5-11pm) • Free

**ROWLES AND COMPANY** 10130-103 St (426-4035) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm; Sat Noon-5pm • Blown glass sculptures by several B.C. and Alberta artists including Mark Gibeau, Arte Vargas, Susan Gottselig and Marco de Vicque • Until January • **ALTERNATIVE EXHIBITION SPACES** • **HOTEL MACDONALD** Acrylic paintings by Steve Mitts • **OXFORD TOWER LOBBY** Oil paintings by Audrey Pannmulla • **THE BELL TOWER** Acrylic paintings by Shella Lutz; watercolours by Glenda Beaver; blown glass by Arte Vargas, Mark Gibeau and Marco de Vicque • **WESTIN HOTEL LOBBY** Oil paintings by Audrey Pannmulla • Until Jan. 29

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gallery artists • until Dec. 25

**PITS GALLERY** Revillon Bldg, lower level, Suites 33, 34, 10320-102 St (970-4923) • **A 3RD ANNUAL 50/5A WINTER ART AUCTION AND FUNDRAISER** Fri, Dec. 12 (7-11pm) • **THE ART SHOW** Presented by Human Youth Society; Sat, Dec. 13 (2-8pm), Sun, Dec. 14 (noon-4pm)

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**THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS** The Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation • Video enhanced theatre production • Dec. 11-12, 10pm (donor), 11pm (show) • \$5 • Fundraiser for the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation

**SPACE STORIES OF IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE WOMEN** Stanley A. Milner Library • Screening of the video produced by Changing Together-A Centre for Immigrant Women • Fri, Dec. 12 (10am) • Free

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL** The Citadel, Shctor Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) • Tom Wood (who wrote the script) recreates his celebrated performance as Ebenezer Scrooge for the fourth straight year in director Bob Baker's lavish stage version of the timeless Charles Dickens story about a Christmas-hating miser who renounces his misanthropic ways after a series of ghostly visitors appear to him on Christmas Eve • until Dec. 24 • Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

**DANCING WITH JAZZ** Jekyll and Hyde Pub, 10610-100 Ave (420-1757) • Presented by Image Theatre • Actor/singer Althea Cunningham's one-woman musical cabaret, in which she tells the story of a young girl's infatuation with music, and how her dream of becoming a singer propelled her into adulthood • Dec. 12-13 (8pm) • \$15 • Tickets available at the door, TIX on the Square

**JAMES AND THE GENTLE PEACH** Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (462-2548) • Presented by Alectra Theatre • A musical adaptation of Roald Dahl's classic children's book about a young orphan who escapes from his miserable existence with his two nasty aunts with the aid of a bag of magical crocodile tongues, a giant peach and a pair of enormous talking bugs • Dec. 11-13, Thu (1pm), Fri (10am, 1pm, 7pm), Sat (2pm) • \$7/\$20 (family of four)/\$5 (matinee); special group rates available • Tickets available at door, by phone or [e-mail@canada.com](http://e-mail@canada.com)

VUEWEEKLY 60 DECEMBER 11-17, 2003



Tickets available at Festival Place box office, TicketMaster

**POCKIN' VEGAS** Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-4051) • A high-energy musical revue celebrating the music of Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, Liberace, Neil Diamond, Wayne Newton and other performers associated with Las Vegas • Until Feb. 22 • Tickets available at Mayfield Dinner Theatre box office

**SURVIVAL: THE IMPROVISATION GAME** The Third Space, 11516-103 St (424-6304) • Live, competitive improvisational comedy with "an ele-

ment of danger" • Dec. 12, 19 • \$5 • Tickets available at the door

**THEATRESPORTS** Varcona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) • Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre • Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges • Every Fri (11pm) • Tickets available by phone

**THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS** Horizon Stage, 1001 Calahou Rd, Spruce Grove (962-8995/451-8000) • A night of funny and heart-warming holiday stories performed by actor, playwright and radio personality Nils Ling • Sat, Dec. 20 (7:30pm) • \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior) • Tickets available at the door, by phone at 962-8995, Horizon Stage box office, TicketMaster

**THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS** The Arden, 5

St. Anne St, St. Albert (459-1542) • A night of funny and heart-warming holiday stories performed by actor, playwright and radio personality Nils Ling • Fri, Dec. 19 (7:30pm) • \$25

**A WONDERFUL LIFE** Kaasa Theatre, lower level Jubilee Auditorium (420-1757) • Presented by ELOPE • Randy Mueller directs Gary Carter, Kevin Mott and Monica Lipscombe in Sheldon Harnick and Joe Raposo's musical version of Frank Capra's 1946 film *It's a Wonderful Life*, about the frustrated owner of a small-town savings and loan who rediscovers the joy of living when an angel grants his wish that he had never been born • Dec. 11-13 (7:30pm) • \$20 (adult)/\$15 (student/senior), donation for the Edmonton Food Bank • Rush tickets available for Thu, Dec. 11 (7:30pm) only: \$12.50 (adult)/\$10 (student/senior) • Tickets available at TIX on the Square

# DO YOU HAVE AN ITEM TO SELL?

CAR, FURNITURE, HOUSE, CONDO, SPORTING EQUIPMENT?

If you buy a 2" x 2" ad in VUE WEEKLY Classifieds for 2 weeks at \$50 per week,

we will run your ad until the item sells!!!

No matter how long it takes.

(some conditions apply)

CALL CAROL ROBINSON AT 780-426-1996 FOR DETAILS

# EVENTS WEEKLY

For your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

## CLUBS/LECTURES

**COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS** See What's Happening Downtown

**THE EDMONTON ASSOCIATION FOR BRIGHT CHILDREN** Provincial Museum of Alberta, 12845-102 Ave (469-4615) • SuperSaturday Series: Grades 1-6; Sat, Dec. 13 (9:30am-11:30am); \$3.50 for each child; pre-register

**EDMONTON'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT** West Edmonton Christian Assembly, 6215-199 St (496-6177) • Proposed amendment to the Lewis Farms Area Structure Plan, the Webber Greens Neighbourhood Structure Plan, Suder Greens Neighbourhood Structure Plan and change to the Zoning Bylaw, Ward 1 • Wed, Dec. 17 (7pm)

**THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE** See What's Happening Downtown

**JHAMAHEM AND THE ARTS** Athabasca University, Rm 225, 2nd Floor, North Tower, 10030-107 St, 7 Street Plaza (428-2064) • Presentation by First Nation artist Jane Ash Poitras • Fri, Dec. 12 (noon-1pm) • Free

**T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON** (433-2932) • Storytelling Invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) • The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

**THE TIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY, GADEN SAMTEN LING** 11403-101 St (479-8014) • Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kushok Dharmchoe of Namgyal Monastery in India • Every Tues (7-9pm); beginners • Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm); advanced

## QUEER LISTINGS

**AKIOS** (454-8449) • A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

**BOOTS AND SADDLES** See What's Happening Downtown

# CLASSIFIEDS

If you want to place your Classified ad in *Vue Weekly* please phone Carol at 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

## business opportunities

**BECOME A SUCCESSFUL WELLNESS CONSULTANT**  
Work your own hours at home. Call 473-5105 for complete details.

**WORK AT HOME / LIVE YOUR DREAMS** \$500-\$3000+ per month parttime; \$3000-\$10,000+ fulltime. Control your hours and income. Full training and support provided. Call (780) 454-2190 for free booklet.

**START YOUR OWN BUSINESS**  
Two brand new Freshomatic vending machines. Snack/pop combo. Motivated to sell. \$7,500/each. Call 457-0692.

**ENTREPRENEURS** Wanted for a Home Based Business. Contact Lianne 417-4718 or Toll free at 1-877-421-5877.

Work unique business from home Visit [www.gotcalook.com/ca/homebody](http://www.gotcalook.com/ca/homebody) Ph 432-5145.

## dance class

**BELLY DANCE CLASSES**  
Beginner. Mon morning or Tues evenings. Starting Jan. 12. 488-0706.

## education

**LIVE YOUR DREAM.**  
Start today, apply for the March 40 Dramatic Arts Program.  
The Vancouver Academy of Dramatic Arts  
[www.yadastudios.com](http://www.yadastudios.com)  
1-866-231-8232

## for sale

**POCK TABLES**  
Solid Oak Tables, 1" Italian Slate, Leather Pockets. Installed (within city).

**LEISURE TIME PRODUCTS** 987-4686

**SUCCESSFUL COURIER CO.** for sale in Edmonton, due to illness. Call (780) 473-8532.

**NEW "A" STYLE HARSH-HELL MANDOLIN CASE** \$75.00 OBO. Ph Carol 426-1996.

coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Practices every Mon and Thu

**METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON** (429-2321) • Weekly non-denominational church services

**PFLAG** See What's Happening Downtown

**POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE** (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) • Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

**PRIME TIMERS** (426-7019) • Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

**THE ROOST** See What's Happening Downtown

**SECRETS BAR AND GRILL** See What's Happening Downtown

**TRANSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP** See What's Happening Downtown

**WOODY'S** 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Sun-Thu 1-12; Fri Sat 1-3 • Gay nightclub. Every Sun-Thu (7-12am); karaoke with Tuzzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free pool. Every weekend: open stage, dance with DJ Arrow Chaser • No membership needed

**YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH** See What's Happening Downtown

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**AFTER DARK** See What's Happening Downtown

**A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES** Rutherford House, 11153 Saskatchewan Dr (427-3995) • Reading of Dylan Thomas's story by Norman Thomas with musical accompaniment by harpist Gordon Ritchie • Dec. 26-28 (2-3pm); \$5 (adult)/\$4 (senior)/\$2.50 (child 7-17yrs)

**A CHRISTMAS PAST** Rutherford House, 11153 Saskatchewan Dr (427-3995) • A typical early 1900s Christmas including Christmas carols, crafts and candy cane ice cream • Dec. 14, 21 (12 and 4pm) • \$3 (adult)/\$2 (senior/youth (7-17)/\$8 (families)/children 6 years and under free

**DANCE MOVES** Jewish Community Centre, 7200-156 St (434-4386) • Open house/free class of Dance Moves • Mon, Dec. 15 (7:30-8:45pm) • Donation to the Edmonton Food Bank

**ICE ON WHYTE FESTIVAL 2003** McIntyre Park, 83 Ave, between 103 and 104 St (439-9166) • [www.olderstrathcona.ca](http://www.olderstrathcona.ca) • Presented by the Old Strathcona Business Association and local business sponsors • Ice sculptures on display; ice

sculpting workshop for the Sculptors' Association of Alberta: Sat, Dec. 13 (9am-4pm); ice sculptors in action: Dec. 12-21; ice sculpting for children in the Small Fry Chippers Pavilion: weekends; ice dance skating: weekday evenings and weekends; holiday entertainment: weekday evenings and weekends • Dec. 12-Jan. 4 (9am-3pm) • Free

**LATIN CHRISTMAS CHARITY BALL** Velvet Lounge, 10041-170 St (433-8314/993-9799)

• Dance to Latin Rhythms. Presented by Salsadidion, Gitana Dance Company • Sat, Dec. 20, free salsa dance lessons (8:30pm) • \$6 (adv) • Tickets available by phone at 433-8314, 993-9799 • Proceeds to the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation and the Alberta Cancer Foundation (Cross Cancer Institute)

**THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS** See What's Happening Downtown

**SUCCESS STORIES OF IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN** See What's Happening Downtown

**TRADE SHOW AND TRAVEL-OUTDOOR GEAR SALE** TransAlta Arts Barns Lobby, 10330-84 Ave • Presented by Hostelling International • Sat, Dec. 13 (10am-4pm)

**TREE OF MEMORIES** Beechmount Cemetery, 12420-104 St, and Edmonton Cemetery Mausoleum, 11820-107 Ave (496-6983) • Remembering lost loved ones at Christmas • Until Jan. 9

## KARAOKE

**AVENUE PIZZA** 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

**B-STREET** 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm); with Brad Scott

**BILLY BOB'S SPORTS BAR** Continental Inn, 16625 Stony Plain Rd (484-7755) • Every Thu (9pm); Musica Thursdays; Music trivia with Escapade Entertainment • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm); Karaoke with Escapade Entertainment

**BLUE QUILL** 326 Saddleback Rd (434-3124) • Every Fri/Sat (10pm)

**BORDERLINE PUB** 3226-82 St (462-1888) • Every Thu-Sat (9:30pm)

**CLAREVIEW PUB** Victoria Trail, 132 Ave (414-1111) • Every Tue (9:30pm-2am)

**CLIFF CLAYVYN'S** 9710-105 St (424-1614) • Every Fri (10pm)

**DOYLE'S PUB** 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30pm); with Dee Dee

## furnished suites

**AWESOME LOCATION**  
Spacious bachelor studios  
1 bdrm. 2 bdrm. Avail. Jan. 1. 428-9261.

## help wanted

**THE FIRM**  
House of Entertainment  
**LOOKING FOR MALES:**  
Chippendale Style Male Revue  
(INTERNATIONAL MEN)

• No Nudity - Must be over 5' 10"  
• Semi muscular build - Good Looking  
• Positive attitude - Some rhythm  
• Great Pay \$555 - We Pay for Travel  
• We also have choreographers to show you how to dance  
• Serious inquiries only  
Call Mark @ Ph: 995-9095  
Email: the-firm@shaw.ca

## help wanted

**CHANGE YOUR LIFE TRAVEL TEACH ENGLISH**  
We train you to teach. 1000's of jobs around the world. Next in-class or ONLINE by correspondence. Jobs guaranteed.  
10762-82 Ave.  
Call for Free info pack 1-888-270-2941.

## lost and found

**REWARD \$200.**  
For anniversary diamond ring, sun-bleached design, gold band, very sentimental. Lost in the area of New Sears Home Store, 137 Ave. and 189 St. Nov. 21. Phone 476-2481.

## moving and hauling

**INFINITY MOVING**  
Save \$\$. Only \$5/hr. Hire us for all your local and long distance moving needs. 450-2500.

## rental space

Nice rental space for workshop on Whyte Ave. \$25/hour. 432-0375.

**DUSTER'S PUB** 6402-118 Ave (474-5554) • Every Wed/Sun

**FRANCO'S** 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu-Sat (9pm); with Woody

**GAS PUMP** 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed; with DJ Gord

**HILLVIEW PUB** 311 Woodvale Rd W, Millwoods (462-0468) • Every Fri/Sat (9:30-1am)

**INGLEWOOD PUB** 12402-118 Ave (451-1390) • Every Thu-Sat (9:30pm)

**JIMMY RAY'S** 15211-111 Ave (486-3390) • Every Sat (9pm)

**KELLY'S** 11540 Jasper Ave (451-8825) • Every Sun/Wed (9pm)

**L.B.'S** 23 Akins Dr, St. Albert (460-9100) • Every Tue/Thu (9pm)

**LEGENDS** 6104-172 St (481-2786) • Every Wed (9pm)

**MARK'S BACK PUB** 13403 Fort Rd (406-5152) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm); with Shawn the Bomb

**MICHAEL'S** 11730 Jasper Ave (482-4767) • Every Mon; with Jammin' Jamie

**ORLANDO'S I** 15163-121 St (457-1195) • Every Sun (9pm)/Wed (10pm)

**ORLANDO'S II** 13509-127 St (451-7799) • Every Wed/Thu (9pm)

**OVERLAND RESTAURANT** 12960 St. Albert Tr (454-0667) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm); with Big Time Entertainment

**ROSARIO'S PUB** 11715-108 Ave (447-4727) • Daily (9pm)

**ROSEBOWL PIZZA** 10111-117 St (482-5152) • Every Wed/Sat (9pm)

**ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL** 10315-124 St (482-1600) • Daily (9:30pm)

**SHERLOCK HOLMES** 10341-82 Ave (433-9676) • Every Sun (9pm); with Scott

**SILVER BULLET** 4704-97 St (437-6203) • Every Wed (8pm)

**STRATHEARN PUB** 9514-87 St (465-5478) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm)

**TODAY'S** 5224-86 St (465-6223) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm)

**WOODY'S** 11725 Jasper Ave, upstairs (488-6636) • Every Sun/Tue (7pm-midnight); Sun to Jan. 6, every Mon/Wed (6pm-midnight); with Annie

**YESTERDAY'S** 1112, 205 Carnegie Dr (459-0259) • Every Tue (9pm)

## painting/decorating

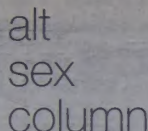
**Fall Special**  
repaint walls - \$470  
repaint ceilings - \$370  
linoleum prep, 1 coat application 1200 sq. ft (bungalow)  
10% senior discount  
Free Estimates  
A.T.M. ENTERPRISES  
907-8884

## pets

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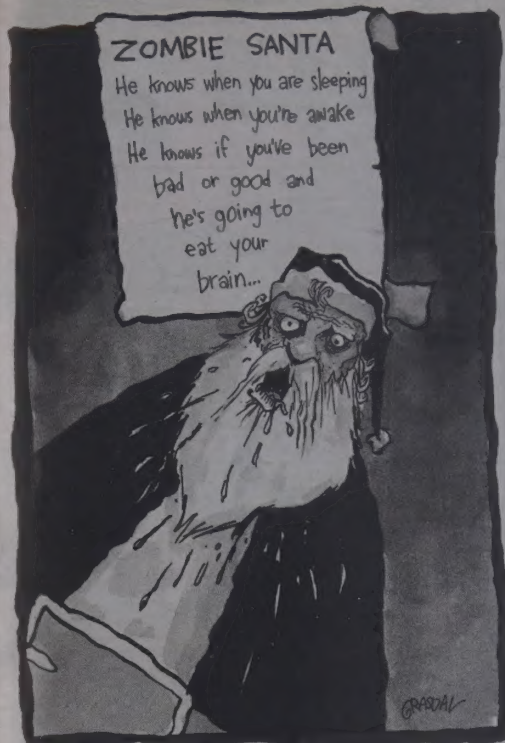
To place your ad in *Vue Weekly Classifieds* Phone 426-1996 for more information





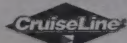


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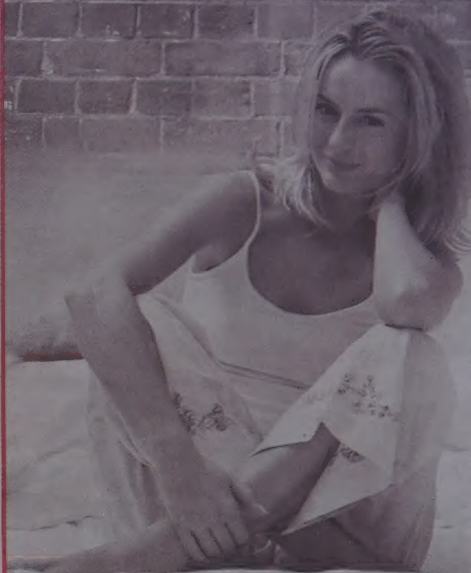
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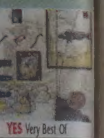
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